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Dissertation

PROPHECY AND APOCALYPSE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I. PRE-EXILIC PROPHECY	1
1. Early Hebrew Religion	3
A. Necromancy	6
B. Divination	7
C. Clairvoyance	9
D. Ecstasy	11
2. Prophets before the Eighth Century	13
A. Abraham	14
B. Moses	14
C. Miriam and Deborah	16
D. Nathan	17
E. Ahijah and Shemaiah	17
F. An anonymous prophet	18
G. Elijah	19
H. Elisha	21
3. Amos, the Prophet of Righteousness	22
A. Yahweh is supreme	24
B. Yahweh reveals himself	26
C. Israel is sinful	27
D. Religion means righteousness	28
E. Israel must be punished	29

	ii
4. Hosea, the Prophet of Love	30
A. Yahweh is the husband of Israel	33
B. Israel is unfaithful to Yahweh	34
C. Yahweh continues to love Israel	35
D. Yahweh makes reasonable demands	36
E. Israel must be disciplined	37
5. Isaiah, the Prophet of Trust	38
A. Yahweh is holy	42
B. Judah is sinful	43
C. Judah must be cleansed	44
D. Judah must trust Yahweh	45
E. There is hope for the future	49
6. Micah, the Prophet of the People	50
A. Yahweh will deal with his people	51
B. The prophet laments for Judah	52
C. Injustice brings its penalty	52
D. The light of prophecy is threatened	53
E. Yahweh worship demands righteousness	54
7. Jeremiah, the Prophet of Inner Experience	54
A. Destiny is controlled by God and man	56
B. Outward reformation is futile	58
C. Judah must repent	59
D. Suffering is a part of religion	61
E. There is a New Covenant.	63

CHAPTER II. POST-EXILIC PROPHECY	66
1. The History of the Exile	66
A. The Fall of Jerusalem	66
B. Life in Babylon, Egypt, and Palestine	68
C. Liberation under Cyrus	75
D. The Rebuilding of the Temple	76
E. Nehemiah and Ezra	78
2. Deutero-Isaiah, 549-538 B. C.	84
A. Israel is forgiven	85
B. Yahweh reigns supreme	86
C. Israel will be free	88
D. Israel will serve Yahweh	89
E. All the earth shall worship Yahweh	92
3. Prophetic Teaching in Certain Psalms	93
A. All the earth shall turn to Yahweh, 22:27-31	94
B. He has the confidence of the nations, 65	95
C. He will readily forgive, 86	95
D. Jerusalem is the universal city, 87	97
4. Zechariah 1-8, 520 B. C.	98
A. The temple must be rebuilt	99
B. Yahweh watches over Jerusalem	100
C. Sin will be driven from Judah	103
D. Peace is assured in the earth	104
E. Righteousness shall be established	105

	iv
5. Malachi, 516-444 B. C.	108
A. Worship must be conducted properly	110
B. The Gentiles will honor Yahweh	112
C. Righteousness must be practiced	112
D. Tithes must be paid	113
E. Blessings will come from Yahweh	113
6. Isaiah 19	114
A. Yahweh will discipline the Egyptians	115
B. The Egyptians will turn to Yahweh	115
7. Jonah, the Missionary Book	117
A. There is no escape from Yahweh	118
B. Prayer and repentance are necessary	119
C. Israel has a message for the world	119
D. Yahweh loves his entire creation	120
CHAPTER III. THE BACKGROUND OF APOCALYPTIC	121
1. The Beginnings of Apocalyptic Thought	123
A. The Roots of Hebrew Eschatology	123
B. Popular Stories of Deliverance	129
C. Ancient Songs	135
D. The Covenant Relationship	143
2. Growing Eschatological Conceptions	148
A. The Day of Yahweh	148
B. Judgment of the Nations	156
C. The Remnant	160
D. The Messianic Hope	164

CHAPTER IV. POST-EXILIC APOCALYPSE	171
1. Ezekiel, the Father of Apocalyptic	171
A. Judah is sinful	176
B. Jerusalem will fall	179
C. Yahweh is absolute	181
D. Yahweh will destroy the nations	184
E. The individual may live	186
F. Restoration is assured	188
G. Blessings come through ritual	190
2. Apocalyptic Fragments in Isaiah 13-23	192
A. Babylon will fall	192
B. Moab will perish	195
C. Egypt will be weakened	196
D. Tyre will diminish	196
3. The Apocalyptic in Haggai	197
A. The temple must be rebuilt	197
B. Prosperity will come	199
C. Yahweh will shake the heavens	199
D. The kingdom will be established	200
4. The Apocalyptic in Trito-Isaiah	202
A. The prophetic message is reinterpreted	202
B. Evil will be punished	204
C. Yahweh will display his power	204
D. Israel will enjoy privileges	205
E. Yahweh promises new heavens and a new earth	207

5. Joel, 400-350 B. C.	208
A. The day of Yahweh is coming	211
B. The people must repent	212
C. The nations will be judged	215
D. Israel will be secure	217
6. The Apocalyptic in Micah 4-7	217
A. Israel will be purged	219
B. Zion is to be established	219
C. The remnant will flourish	220
D. The messiah will come	221
E. Israel shall triumph	221
7. Historical Interlude---The Rise of the Greeks	222
8. Zechariah 9-14, 218 B. C.	225
A. The Greeks will be destroyed	227
B. Jerusalem will endure	231
C. Yahweh will gather his people	231
D. The messianic kingdom will come soon	233
E. Prophecy will be punished with death	234
9. Isaiah 24-7	235
A. Yahweh will be exalted	236
B. He will judge the nations	238
C. Israel will be restored	239
E. The righteous are immortal	239

10. Daniel, 165 B. C.	241
A. Yahweh delivers the faithful	245
B. Yahweh's purpose is unfolded	248
C. Angels are made prominent	250
D. The kingdom of righteousness is near	251
E. Immortality becomes more clear	252
CHAPTER V. A COMPARISON OF PROPHECY AND APOCALYPSE	253
1. The Distinctive Elements of Prophecy	253
A. Religion as Personal Relationship	253
B. Emphasis upon Moral Living	254
C. Concern with Current Human Affairs	255
D. Constructive Visions of the Future	256
E. Progress through Divinely Guided Effort	257
2. Distinctive Elements of Apocalypse	257
A. The Messiah	257
B. The Kingdom of God	258
C. The Day of Yahweh	259
D. The New Heavens and the New Earth	260
3. Similarities of Prophecy and Apocalypse	261
A. Monotheism	261
B. Faith in the Power of God	262
C. Hope for the Future	263
D. Punishment for Sin	263
4. Points of Contrast	264
5. Relative Values	267

CHAPTER I

PRE-EXILIC PROPHECY

The English noun "prophecy" is derived from the Greek verb προφητεύω , which means "to be an interpreter of the gods or to proclaim the divine counsels."¹ There is in the word a suggestion of foretelling the future, but this is considered incidental by the lexicographers.

The corresponding Hebrew verb is נָבַא , which may be traced back through older Semitic forms. The root, not found in the Qal, means "

. .to boil up, to boil forth, as a fountain; hence to pour forth words, like those who speak with fervor of mind under divine inspiration, as prophets and poets.

It is significant that the Hebrews regularly used the Niph'al and Hithpa'el forms of this verb, which are passive and intensive, respectively, since they believed the prophets were moved by some influence higher than their own powers. The verb may also mean "to chant, to sing or to praise God" under divine control; and in the intensive form it may mean "to rave or to become mad."

¹ G. Abbot-Smith, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 390.

² Edward Robinson, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, pp. 638-9

The Semitic root contains the idea of sprouting or shooting up, breaking forth, pressing forward, protruding, elevating oneself, or standing up. Cornill finds that it was Assyrian and Babylonian, and identifies the same root with the first syllables of two familiar royal names, Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar.³ Nebo or Nabu was a god of wisdom.

Prophecy is, according to Webster:

That which is spoken for a god; interpretation or declaration of the will or purpose of a god; inspired declaration or revelation of the divine will, including moral teaching or warning, consoling, exhorting, giving an example of fellowship with God, and the like, and, on special occasions, particularly in Old Testament times, of foretelling, or declaring beforehand, the purpose of God.⁴

The prophet, *προφήτης*, or *נָבִי* is, therefore, a person who proclaims a message divinely implanted within him. He speaks for God and makes clear what his will is. He is an ambassador inspired and "sent" by God himself.⁵

He is further defined as:

Ein Mann, welcher die Fähigkeit hat, die zeitlichen Dinge unter ewigen Gesichtspunkten zu betrachten, der überall Gottes Walten erkennt und nun als die verkörperte Stimme Gottes seinen Zeitgenossen den Plan Gottes zu deuten und sie nach Gottes Willen zu lenken weiss.⁶

³ Carl Heinrich Cornill, Der israelitische Prophetismus, pp. 9-10.

⁴ Webster's New International Dictionary, p. 1718.

⁵ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, pp. 3-4.

⁶ Cornill, op. cit., p. 36.

1. Early Hebrew Religion

In common with the Semitic people, which included the Babylonians, Assyrians, Aramaeans, Phoenicians, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Hebrews, Arabs, Carthaginians, and Abyssinians,⁷ the Hebrews at first believed that all things were dominated by supernatural powers. The realms of nature, of animals, and of men were closely associated together and with the spirits which ruled them. Any phenomenon such as running water, a growing tree, a mountain, or a stone of unusual size or shape was thought to be "charged" with divine influence.

There were three early stages of thought common to mankind.⁸ Animatism refers to the belief that every object which influences man governs itself; animism that every such object is governed by some power greater than itself; and polytheism that there are many spirits or demons, and then gods and goddesses, which exercise wilful control over earthly affairs. Each tribe, and often each family, worshipped its own god. A god might seek to be connected with human beings in order that it should not be forsaken, as the Arabian Jinns.⁹

⁷ George A. Barton, The Religion of Israel, p. 2.

⁸ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, pp. 5-14

⁹ Ibid., pp. 19-20.

When the Hebrews learned to worship one god out of many, their religion was monolatrous, and when they later acknowledged only one god, it became monotheistic. They thought of their god as a storm god and as a leader in battle. Gradually he acquired control of agricultural pursuits and the affairs of nations, and was greatly concerned with the righteousness of his people.

From the earliest times it seemed necessary to placate the wrath of the god or secure his help through totemism, taboos, or ancestor worship. Gradually these gave way to higher forms of religious observance, particularly after the exodus from Egypt. The most distinct characteristic of the Hebrew religion in the days of the early Fathers was the response of tribal leaders and their families to the personal revelation of God.¹⁰ Leslie points out that in the strictest sense the Hebrews were not polytheists.¹¹ Their early name for God, *אֱלֹהִים*, is a plural form which seems to designate the combined spiritual force of various tribal deities.

God was so real to the Hebrews that they felt compelled to search out his revelations. They must avoid his displeasure. They must secure his help. They must know his will.

¹⁰ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 68-9

¹¹ Ibid., p. 76.

There are many references in the Old Testament which show how God revealed himself through physical phenomena and the events of life.¹² His power was manifest in the sky through the heavenly bodies, light and darkness; in the atmosphere of the earth, as seen in the wind, the storm, thunder, lightning, rain, the rainbow, drought, hail, snow, dew, heat, and cold; in the wonders of the earth, as creation, earthquake, volcanic activity, fire, the pillar of cloud, vegetation, and control over the waters of ocean, river, and sea; in the life of animals, insects, reptiles, and birds; in holy places and holy objects; and in his control of human destiny through his choice of Israel, the plagues, deliverance from Egypt, preservation in the desert, establishment in Canaan, prosperity, adversity, victory in war, and frequent punishment.

The Hebrews considered God absolutely fundamental in nature, in human affairs, and particularly in the life of their nation. It was, therefore, of greatest importance that they find means of understanding the divine mind as best they could. He might reveal himself to them in human form, send angelic messengers, appear in dreams or visions, and send warning or assurances through signs and omens, but this was

¹² Lewis Bayles Payton, The Sources for the Early Religion of Israel, pp. 3-25.

not enough to satisfy a religious people. They were eager to approach him on their own initiative because they wanted to satisfy their physical and spiritual needs.

Necromancy. There were several means by which the mysteries of the divine mind might be interpreted. Necromancy, or the art of communicating with the spirits of the dead, was practiced to a considerable extent, but gradually fell into disfavor. The fact that the Book of the Covenant, Exodus 20-33, makes no mention of necromancy indicates that as late as the Eighth Century it was accepted among the Hebrews, as it was known to have been among other Semitic peoples. The Deuteronomic Code, a century later, stipulates that no necromancer shall be found among the people, for any such is "an abomination unto Jehovah."¹³ The Holiness Code, Leviticus 17-26, which comes from the century of the exile,¹⁴ is still more specific.

The soul that turneth unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards, to play the harlot after them, I will even set my heart against that soul, and cut him off from his people.¹⁵

Those who wrote the law became more and more vigorous in their condemnation of necromancy because they considered

¹³ Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

¹⁴ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 242.

¹⁵ Leviticus 20:6

not know to which a religious people. They were asked to
approach him on their own initiative because they wanted to
establish a personal and spiritual bond.

... There were several reasons why the
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the recognition of any spirit other than that of God a challenge to his supremacy.¹⁶ Monotheism changed the foolishness of necromancy into a sin. As a last resort, when he was in desperate straits because of the Philistine threat, King Saul went to the witch of Endor whom he asked to call up the spirit of Samuel in order to advise him.¹⁷ According to the Chronicler, Saul came to his death because in this emergency he failed to inquire of Jehovah.¹⁸ Nevertheless, necromancy persisted until after the Second Temple was built, for there is bitter condemnation of it expressed in Trito-Isaiah.¹⁹

Divination. A second means of searching into the mysteries which lay beyond ordinary knowledge was divination. This also came under condemnation, but not so directly as did necromancy. The Teraphim seem to have been images in human form which were relics of ancestor-worship, and sometimes cherished as household gods.²⁰ Of them we read:

¹⁶ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 78.

¹⁷ I Samuel 28:1-25.

¹⁸ I Chronicles 10:13-14.

¹⁹ Isaiah 65:2-4.

²⁰ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., pp. 60-1.

The teraphim have spoken vanity; and the diviners have seen a lie; and they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain.²¹

It is clear that these images were used in divination, but there remains no record of the method.

Sacred lots were frequently cast, the belief being held that God would indicate his will by the result. An author of Proverbs wrote:

The lot is cast into the lap, but the disposing thereof is of Jehovah.²²

There is mention of the Ephod, which sometimes was an image and sometimes a garment, and of Urim and Thummim. These latter are thought to have been specially shaped or colored stones which, when drawn by a priest from a pocket of the apron-like Ephod, indicated an answer.²³ One arrangement would mean "yes", another "no", and still another, no answer at all. On various occasions, with or without the offices of a priest, lots were used in determining the course of the nation, in detecting a criminal, in choosing an animal for sacrifice, in dividing the land of Canaan, or in selecting those who were to perform special duties. Arrows or sticks were sometimes used instead of stones.

²¹ Zechariah 10:2a

²² Proverbs 16:33

²³ Oesterley and Robinson, op. cit., pp. 78, 149-50.

See however, W. R. Arnold, Ephod and Ark, Harvard Theological Studies, III, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1917.

Ordeal by the water of bitterness as a test of chastity, while carried out in quite a different manner,²⁴ was supported by the theory that God would render justice.

Clairvoyance. A third means of learning the truth was through clairvoyance. The seers, who exercised this power, were called upon to describe present, past, or future events which the ordinary person could not understand. There are two Hebrew words for "seer." The first, חֹזֵן, is from the verb חָזַן, which means to observe, to understand a vision or an oracle, to gaze upon, or to experience something with the mind. Gad, the חֹזֵן of David, reproved his king in the name of Jehovah for numbering Israel, and gave him the hard choice of three years of famine, three months of military reverses, or three days of pestilence.²⁵ Heman was spoken of as the king's חֹזֵן,²⁶ evidently having some responsibility in the court. Samuel was also a חֹזֵן.²⁷

The second Hebrew word for "seer" is חֹזֵן, the Qal participle of חָזַן, which is the common verb for look at; see, or understand. Hananai was a חֹזֵן who dared come to

²⁴ Numbers 5.

²⁵ I Chronicles 21:9ff.

²⁶ I Chronicles 25:5

²⁷ I Chronicles 29:29.

Asa, king of Judah, and reprimand him for making a league with Ben-hadad, king of Syria.²⁸ He was thrown into prison for his pains. Samuel is also called a נִדְבָן in several places.²⁹

The story of how Samuel met Saul, who was searching for his father's asses, is the best illustration in the scriptures of the activities of a seer.³⁰ It was expected that he be paid for his services. He knew that Saul and his servant were coming, was able to tell them that the animals had returned home, took a leading part in a sacrifice festival, made Saul his guest, annointed him king, and gave him directions for the return journey.

The seer seems to have possessed a second sight, or some sort of intuitive knowledge of the truth, which was thought to have come directly from God. In many ways he was like a fortune-teller at his best. His work, which was quite personal, marks a distinct advance over necromancy and divination. Robinson characterizes Samuel the seer as "a sober, dignified, weighty person, standing high in favour with God and in honour with man."³¹

²⁸ II Chronicles 16:1-10.

²⁹ I Chronicles 9:22; 26:28; 29:29; I Samuel 9:9,19.

³⁰ I Samuel 9:5-10:16.

³¹ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 30.

Ecstasy. A fourth means of interpreting the divine spirit was through ecstasy. Webster defines ecstasy as:

A state of being beside oneself, or beyond all reason and self-control, as when given over to an extreme and engrossing emotion; a morbid condition of the nervous system marked by mental exaltation, suspension of voluntary motion, and depression of the vital functions; a state of overmastering feeling, esp. joy; rapture of delight; violent distraction; insanity; madness.³²

About the time the kingdom was being established it seemed desirable to many to induce a highly emotional state by the use of music, a wild dance, intoxicating drinks, spending time in a holy place, or association with other ecstasies.³³ There resulted a kind of self hypnotism which was often evidenced by a trance, some prophetic oracle or an unusual physical reaction. When Samuel sent Saul back to his father after the circumstances just described, he directed him in such a way that he would fall in with a band of ecstasies who were playing musical instruments and "prophesying." We read that רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, the Spirit of God, "came mightily upon him and he prophesied among them."³⁴ The רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים came mightily upon Saul when he sent out his first call to arms

³² Webster's New International Dictionary, p. 697.

³³ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 55-59.

³⁴ I Samuel 10:10.

against the Ammonites³⁵ and departed from him in his court when an evil spirit possessed him.³⁶

The ecstatic influence seems to have been well under way during the days of Samuel and continued to flourish for at least a hundred and fifty years until the time of Elijah and Elisha, who were strong leaders of the movement. Leslie makes clear that "the object of the ecstatic activity was to achieve unity with the deity."³⁷ He further states that there were in the movement "stirring national enthusiasm, noble religious thoughts, and powerful religious excitation."³⁸ It evidently served a wholesome purpose by injecting an element of fervor into the Hebrew religion, but it largely passed away in the face of something better. These ecstatic tendencies had not been native to the Semitic people, but came into Palestine from Thrace before the Children of Israel entered the land.³⁹

The ecstasies were the descendants of the seers and the direct ancestors of the prophets.⁴⁰ It is at first surprising

³⁵ I Samuel 11:6.

³⁶ I Samuel 16:14.

³⁷ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 115.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 115-116.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 116-119.

⁴⁰ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 35.

that the common Hebrew word for ecstatic was *נָבִיא*, the regular word for prophet. We read that the *נָבִיא* was the same as he who was once called a *נֶאֱמָר*.⁴¹ The time soon came when Amos declared *לֹא-נָבִיא אֶנִּי וְלֹא-בֶן-נְבִיאִים אֶנִּי*.⁴² He was disclaiming connection with any ecstatic band which might be called "sons of the prophets."⁴³ But ecstasy, with all its weakness, superstition and overemphasis upon emotion, inspired an intense loyalty to God and prepared the way for true prophecy.

Lods accepts the theory that prophecy had its fundamental basis in ecstasy,⁴⁴ but Porteous insists that, however important ecstasy may have been in the beginning, the great prophets gradually succeeded in sweeping away much of the mystery about religion and bringing God "right into the secular world of man's daily life."⁴⁵

2. Prophets before the Eighth Century

It has been pointed out that there are several Old

⁴¹ I Samuel 9:9.

⁴² Amos 7:14.

⁴³ Richard S. Cripps, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, p. 233.

⁴⁴ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 56-9.

⁴⁵ Norman W. Porteous, "Prophecy," Record and Revelation, p. 217.

Testament terms to designate a prophet. We find man of god, servant, messenger, interpreter, seer and watchman.⁴⁶ The first man to be called a נָבִיא was Abraham.⁴⁷ Abimelech, a king of the south, had taken Sarah, thinking she was the patriarch's sister instead of his wife. When he learned his mistake in a dream he feared for his life, since the man whom he had wronged was "a prophet." It is most appropriate that the one who was called the father of the Hebrew nation should also be known by such a title, but a definition of just what it meant when applied to him would be of great interest.

Moses. Moses is spoken of as a prophet and more than a prophet. When Miriam, his sister, and Aaron, his brother, had some difference with him because of the wife he had taken, Jehovah called the three of them to the tent of meeting and appeared in a cloud.⁴⁸ If there were a prophet there God might reveal himself "in a vision" or "in a dream," but Moses was not so. He need not converse with him "in dark speeches," but could speak "mouth to mouth." Moses, then, was able to receive the divine message directly, and not as a clairvoyant or an ecstatic. The rest of the story goes on to show how Moses was so high in the favor of God that Miriam had to be punished with a seven day affliction of leprosy because she

⁴⁶ Albert C. Knudson, The Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p.29.

⁴⁷ Genesis 20:7.

⁴⁸ Numbers 12:1-15.

had challenged her brother. Moses was not a prophet or, at least, an ordinary one. But in the closing chapter of Deuteronomy are found the words:

There hath not arisen a יְהוָה since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face.⁴⁹

More than any other single individual, Moses shaped the life and thinking of the Hebrew people. He fled from Egypt after striking down a royal taskmaster. He learned of the Kenite god while residing in the desert country of Midian where Jethro was a priest. On Sinai, the holy volcanic mountain, he came into amazing fellowship with this god who touched his soul and commissioned him to lead his people. Yahweh, יהוה, was his name, known to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob only as God Almighty, אלהים.⁵⁰ With the help of Yahweh Moses inflicted the plagues upon Egypt, led his countrymen across the Red Sea, brought them to Sinai, and gave them the first form of the decalogue which became the foundation of their law. He was their first judge. He gave them a sense of worship through the tent of meeting. He introduced the Passover festival. Yahweh was real to him, and he made him real to the people. There was a new sense of unity and of moral obligation. Yahweh was holy; therefore Israel must be holy. Moses had taken stimulating but rather

⁴⁹ Deuteronomy 34:10

⁵⁰ Exodus 6:3.

crude conceptions of religion from the Kenites who had regarded Yahweh as a moon-god,⁵¹ enriched them through his own experience, and added a spiritual intensity.

Duhm speaks of Moses as "der erste Prophet Israels," one who stands at the beginning of the history of this people.⁵² He goes on to question the historicity of his rescue, as an infant, from the Nile, his position in the royal court and some of the "wonder" features of his life, but finds in the outstanding quality of his leadership ample reason for regarding his work as of the highest importance.

Miriam and Deborah. Miriam is spoken of as a prophetess, possibly because with a timbrel in her hand she led all the women in a dance of thanksgiving for deliverance from the Red Sea.⁵³ Deborah, a prophetess, was the greatest woman military leader in Hebrew history.⁵⁴ Fiery patriotism and loyal devotion to Yahweh burn in the song of victory which she sang. It is notable that when she judged the people she sat under a palmtree known by her name. Apparently she had won a reputation by the ancient practice of interpreting the rustling of the leaves as the voice of God.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 92-96.

⁵² Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, p. 30.

⁵³ Exodus 15:20-21.

⁵⁴ Judges 4:4-5:31.

⁵⁵ W. O. E. Cesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 26.

Nathan. Samuel and Gad have already been mentioned as prophetic seers in the early days of the monarchy. A notable contemporary was Nathan who dared level his finger at David and condemn him for his sin with Bathsheba. By the moral indignation which flared within him he helped to elevate the meaning of prophecy. He, also, was something of a seer in that he was able to sense that David's infant son should die.

Ahijah and Shemaiah. More and more the prophets took an interest in national affairs. Ahijah of Shiloh⁵⁶ rent his new garment into twelve pieces and gave ten of them to Jeroboam in token of the promise that the latter should rule over ten tribes of Israel after the death of Solomon. The nation had sinned in worshiping the gods of the Sidonians, the Moabites, and the Ammonites; therefore punishment must come through division of the kingdom. When Yahweh had given his word through Ahijah the prophet it must be fulfilled. The message of a true prophet through whom Yahweh spoke was, therefore, considered inviolable. When old and blind, Ahijah recognized the wife of Jeroboam when she came to him in distress. He told her that her son should die and that the evil house of Jeroboam should come to an end. Ahijah was a seer.

Shemaiah⁵⁷ warned Rehoboam and the two tribes of Judah

⁵⁶ I Kings 11:29-40; 12:15; II Chronicles 10:15.

⁵⁷ I Kings 12:22-24; II Chronicles 11:2-4; 12:5-15; I Kings 14:1-19.

and Benjamin in the name of Yahweh not to fight against their brothers in the north. The division had come through the design of God and was not to be contested. His counsel was heeded. Five years later, when Rehoboam had grown strong and forsaken the law, Shishak of Egypt plundered the temple treasures.⁵⁸ When Shemaiah declared that this was a just punishment the people repented and were spared from further destruction. Shemaiah felt himself commissioned to speak with divine authority, and was so regarded by his hearers. The prophets seemed worthy of the greatest respect.

An anonymous prophet. More and more the prophets were concerned with worship. When Jeroboam became established in the north he made two golden calves. One he set up in Bethel and the other in Dan. He said to the people:

It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.⁵⁹

He made arrangements of his own regarding the high places, priests, sacrifices, and festivals. There was an immediate prophetic protest. An anonymous "man of God" declared to the king as he was preparing to burn incense that

⁵⁸ Henry Preserved Smith, Old Testament History, pp. 184-5.

⁵⁹ I Kings 12:28.

the kingdom should be wrested from him.⁶⁰ His hand was dried up as he put it forth against the prophet and restored only after the king implored him to ask the favor of Yahweh. Back of this wonder tale may be seen an intense devotion to true worship. The prophet was not to be bribed, for he flatly refused the hospitality of the penitent king. The record makes clear that it is the word of Yahweh spoken through the prophet, and not the will of the prophet himself, which carries weight; for the man came to an untimely death because he failed to obey completely the revelation given him.⁶¹

Elijah. The greatest of the early prophets, after Moses, was Elijah.⁶² His name אֱלִיָּהוּ , means "my God is Yahweh," and expresses the spirit of his life. A mysterious, but a towering personality, he appeared during the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah to challenge the spread of Baal worship in the north and to call the nation back to the higher religious and moral standards of the nomadic period.

Ahab, king of Israel, married Jezebel, a daughter of the Tyrian king who had been a priest of Baal. Jezebel was

⁶⁰ I Kings 13:1-10.

⁶¹ I Kings 13:11-32.

⁶² The "Elijah Narratives" are found in I Kings 17; 18; 19:1-18; 22 and II Kings 1. See W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 98-99.

an ardent supporter of her father's religion and labored for its complete establishment in her adopted country. She persuaded her husband to build a temple to Baal in Samaria and instituted vigorous persecution of those who worshiped Yahweh.

The quality of Elijah's character is made clear in his reaction to these circumstances.⁶³ He met four hundred prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, and in a dramatic contest demonstrated the supremacy of Yahweh.⁶⁴ He found God in the reality of a personal experience on Mt. Horeb where Moses had received the law.⁶⁵ He proved himself a fearless champion of righteousness when he rebuked Ahab after he had caused the murder of Naboth in order that he might acquire his vineyard. As a leader of the prophetic party he was interested in affairs of state, working for the overthrow of Ahab and of Benhadad II, king of Syria. He looked to the future in passing on his prophetic mantle to Elisha. The work of Elijah, in preparation for the great prophetic era which was soon to dawn, can hardly be overestimated.

⁶³ Ismar J. Peritz, Old Testament History, pp. 169-73.

⁶⁴ I Kings 18.

⁶⁵ The holy mountain where Moses and Elijah communed with Yahweh is known as Horeb in the E document, and Sinai in J and P. See W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, p. 32.

an evident number of her father's religious and labored for
the people's enlightenment in her adopted country. She
remained in Hungary to build a bridge to God in her
and finished various persecutions of those who were
known.

The quality of Kish's character is more clear in his
reaction to these circumstances. He not only married
himself of her on 11. 1891, and in a dramatic fashion
demonstrated the superiority of Kish. He found her in the
vicinity of a personal acquaintance on 11. 1891, and after
received the law. He proved himself a typical champion of
righteousness when he learned that after he had ordered the
murder of Kish in order that he might acquire his inheritance.
As a leader of the people's party he was interested in
affairs of state, and for the overthrow of the end of
Benedict 11, King of Sicily. He looked to the future in
passing on his prophetic mantle to Kish. The work of
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Elisha. The importance of Elisha lies in his response to everyday human need. The stories about him were of a popular nature. This may account for the fact that his name appears so frequently throughout the first half of II Kings. He sweetened the water in a spring, multiplied oil in the home of a poor widow, raised the Shunamite woman's son, freed a meal of pottage from poison, healed the leprosy of Naaman, and even helped a man by bringing his fallen axe-head to the top of the water in which it had fallen. Whether historical or not, the emphasis of such stories was not lost. Elisha could be severe when occasion demanded. His curse in the name of Yahweh brought death to the two lads who mocked him and leprosy upon Gehazi, his faithless servant.

Elisha was a seer and an ecstatic. It was said of him by the Syrians, for example, that he could reveal to the king of Israel words which the Syrian king spoke in his own bedchamber.⁶⁶ He is mentioned several times in connection with "the sons of the prophets," and used music to inspire the spirit of prophecy.⁶⁷ If these tendencies seem a mark of retrogression, let it be remembered that the time was fast approaching when still greater advances in religious understanding were to be realized.

Elisha expressed absolute confidence in the power of Yahweh. When the Syrians were threatening he said to his

⁶⁶ II Kings 6:12.

⁶⁷ II Kings 3:15.

servant:

Fear not: for they that are with us are more than they that be with them.⁶⁸

Thereupon he prayed, and the young man saw that the mountain was "full of horses and chariots round about Elisha."⁶⁹

3. Amos, the Prophet of Righteousness

In 885 B. C. Ashurnasirpal came to the Assyrian throne and began a policy of expansion which lasted for two centuries, even while Syria was the dominant power. The gradual decline of Syria and the slow advance of Assyria lasted until 608 B. C. when Adadnirari III conquered Damascus.⁷⁰ Palestine enjoyed freedom from outside oppression between 806 and 745 B. C. She was not yet overwhelmed by the Assyrians.

This relief from foreign domination made possible a revival of trade, the accumulation of wealth, and the enjoyment of many luxuries in both Judah and Israel. There was a new sense of well being and independence. Unfortunately, such prosperity and overconfidence ushered in a host of evils.

⁶⁸ II Kings 6:16.

⁶⁹ II Kings 6:17.

⁷⁰ For a clear chronological table of the Assyrian period see George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Volume I. p. xxi.

With their rather meager political and economic experience the children of Israel were not in a position to avoid the perils of inflation. They had been a nomad people, living in tents, wandering about from place to place, and making a scanty living by their flocks. Water, land, and pasture were common property. This led to great social and economic equality. A practical kind of democracy was accepted as a matter of course.

After the conquest of Canaan, Israel adopted agriculture and lived a settled life in houses and villages, but still preserved many of the ancient customs. Following the establishment of the monarchy, Israel went through great social and economic changes. Law and order made more trade possible. The caravan routes were developed. The kings encouraged trade. Cities sprang up.

These new conditions brought about a great accumulation of wealth in contrast to the common poverty during the period of the judges. The innovations of civilization destroyed the old communism. Land became subject to private ownership, and the use of money opened up a struggle for quick and easy wealth with many resultant evils.

The favored classes were unscrupulous in their exploitation of the poor. The royal officials became feverish in their greed for gain. The merchants lost no opportunity

to increase their already exorbitant profits by dishonest measure. The worst feature of the whole situation was the impossibility of the poor gaining any kind of justice in the courts.

As a result of these conditions the wealth of Israel was rapidly coming into the hands of a few. The nation was vastly richer, but the masses of the people were much more poverty stricken than in the early days. What could bring about a proper distribution of wealth?

In to such a world Amos the prophet came. He was a herdsman of Tekoa. It seems that he bred a choice kind of sheep and dressed sycamore trees. Tekoa was set in the midst of a stern and rugged country, the qualities of which seem to have become a part of his soul. His experience with wild animals taught him courage. His intimacy with the forces of nature made him strong. His simple background led him to appreciate human values and made him honest through and through.

Amos worked no wonder, responded to no frenzied ecstasy and did not venture to pull aside the curtains of the future. He based his messages upon observation and careful reasoning. He believed that Yahweh was speaking through him.

Yahweh is supreme. Anyone who turns to the book of Amos and reads rapidly is impressed by the frequent repetition of Yahweh's declaration, "I will." Within nine chapters

mention is made at least seventy-five times of action which Yahweh would soon perform or had already accomplished. There are also many indirect references to his power.

Amos is the first to speak of Israel's god as יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, "Yahweh God of Hosts,"⁷¹ a title which identifies him with all powers. It is found frequently in later prophets and the psalms.

Yahweh rules the mighty constellations, the mysteries of night and day, and the life-giving rain drawn up from the sea.⁷² It is he who created the heavens and the earth. The land melts at his touch.⁷³

He controls the destinies of nations,⁷⁴ recognizes other races of people besides the Hebrews as his children,⁷⁵ and is ready to destroy the sinful kingdom from the earth.⁷⁶

This doctrine of the universal supremacy of Yahweh is foremost in the teaching of Amos.⁷⁷ It was important that he should rule all natural forces, but still more so that he be presented as the one who controls universal moral law. Amos did not rise to complete monotheism, but he made

⁷¹ Amos 3:13b; 5:14, 16; 5:27; 6:8, 14 ⁷² Amos 5:8-9.

⁷³ Amos 9:5-6 ⁷⁴ Amos 6:14 ⁷⁵ Amos 9:7

⁷⁶ Amos 9:8

⁷⁷ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets,

such advances in that direction that other prophets were able, the more easily, to carry on beyond him.

Yahweh reveals himself. When Amos insisted that he was neither a prophet nor a son of prophet he meant that he had no use for ecstasy or any magical art. Nevertheless, Yahweh was very real to him. He told about visions of locusts,⁷⁸ fire,⁷⁹ ripe fruit,⁸⁰ and an altar,⁸¹ but they seemed to be illustrations of certain truths rather than psychic experiences. He saw Yahweh testing a faulty wall with a plumb-line⁸² and knew that therein lay a representation of the ultimate standard of righteousness.⁸³ The ways of Yahweh are open to those who can understand, and he will do nothing which is not revealed through his prophets.⁸⁴

The secrets of the divine mind are revealed, first, in the law of cause and effect. Everything comes about by reason. Two people walking together, a lion roaring in the forest, a bird falling in a snare, a trumpet blown and sudden are never matters of chance. Yahweh is the ultimate cause of all things.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ Amos 7:1 ⁷⁹ Amos 7:4 ⁸⁰ Amos 8:3 ⁸¹ Amos 9:1

⁸² Amos 7:7

⁸³ Richard S. Cripps, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, p. 224.

⁸⁴ Amos 3:7 ⁸⁵ Amos 3:3-6.

Yahweh is to be seen in the afflictions which he has sent upon the people. Famine, drought, blasting, mildew, locust, pestilence and slaughter are divine warning against evil. Greater afflictions must still come, since the people have not yet heeded.⁸⁶

Israel is sinful. Unscrupulous merchants wait eagerly for the time when they can use false weights and give short change in their bargaining. Bond-slaves are taken for no more than the price of a pair of shoes.⁸⁷ A mockery is made of justice in the courts.⁸⁸

The wealthy build themselves sumptuous palaces of hewn stone and ivory, one for summer and one for winter. In indolence and careless luxury their occupants lie down on silken couches to eat the most delicious meat and drink wine by the bowlful.⁸⁹

The wives of these aristocrats, like thoughtless kine, are greedy, luxury loving and selfish. They drive their husbands to win more wealth by any possible method.⁹⁰

In contrast to these advantages of the rich is the pitiable plight of the poor. They must pay exorbitant prices for the common necessities, and in times of emergency

86 Amos 4:6-12

89 Amos 6:1-6

87 Amos 8:4-6

90 Amos 4:1-3

88 Amos 5:10-13

borrow money at high rates of interest so that many of them lose their ancestral property and are driven into slavery.

At the same time, religious observance is not lacking.⁹¹ The people come in large numbers to Bethel, Dan, Gilgal, and Beersheba, but much of the worship is hollow form. Baal is honored as highly as Yahweh. Outward prosperity makes the nation feel that God is pleased with them. What a lack of genuine religion there is !

Of all the nations of the earth Yahweh knew and preserved Israel as his people; therefore he expects more of them than of any other and must punish them more severely for their iniquities.⁹²

Religion means righteousness. The material minded were satisfying their consciences with formal worship.⁹³ Perhaps they did not stop to realize how much more was expected of them. At Bethel, when Amaziah the priest was officiating in dignity on the occasion of a festival of ingathering, Amos cried out in the name of Yahweh:

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not

⁹¹ Amos 5:4-5; 4:4; 8:14

⁹² Amos 3:1-2

⁹³ Elmer A. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, pp. 31-39.

accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of your viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.⁹⁴

These words mark the high point in the teaching of Amos. They are strong and rugged, calling for social justice as a necessary preparation for worship. There is intense feeling but little consolation in Amos. He pleads with the people to turn to Yahweh.⁹⁵

Israel will be punished. Because the people have sinned they must bear the inevitable consequences. They who look for a Day of Yahweh will find that it is darkness and not light, doom and not victory.⁹⁶ There will be wailing in the streets, and all the mourners will be called to tears.⁹⁷ There will be lamentation in place of feasting and song.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah.⁹⁸

Death for all sinners and captivity for the nation will be the final result.⁹⁹

In commenting on the fact that Amos has so much to say about the terrible punishment which was certain to fall

⁹⁴ Amos 5:1-4

⁹⁷ Amos 5:16

⁹⁵ Amos 5:14-15, 6

⁹⁸ Amos 8:11

⁹⁶ Amos 5:18

⁹⁹ Amos 9:10

upon Israel, Knudson makes clear that the emphasis of this prophet is not doom, but the moral law. Religion means righteousness. "To seek the good is to seek Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah is to seek the good."¹⁰⁰

4. Hosea, the Prophet of Love

The social and religious situation in Israel during the days of Hosea was practically as it had been when Amos prophesied, for the two men were almost contemporary. The work of Amos fell between the years 760 and 750 B. C., while Hosea was active some fifteen or twenty years later.¹⁰¹

Palestine was enjoying a golden age of economic prosperity. Jeroboam II was on the throne in the northern kingdom. By the time of Hosea, however, some of the false security which had called forth denunciations from Amos had begun to disappear. Assyria was growing stronger. The kings who followed Jeroboam were weak.

Hosea came face to face with Baal worship, the original agricultural religion of Canaan. The first meaning of the word בַּל, which is commonly translated "Baal," is "lord, master, possessor," or "owner." The second is "husband." It

¹⁰⁰ Albert C. Knudson, The Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, pp. 314, 301.

comes from a verbal root which means "to have dominion over" or "to marry" a wife.

The Canaanites had adapted to their own needs the general Semitic belief in spirits which dominated springs, trees, or mountains. They were convinced that every plain, or even every fertile field, was "possessed" by some לַיָּה which was really its owner. The Baals loved the promontories or "high places" where they were worshiped. Groves of trees, crude stone pillars, and altars for sacrifice were usually found in these favorite spots.

The fundamental purpose of Baal worship was to insure the fertility of land, flocks, and families. Harvest festivals and sacrifices, which were originally Canaanite rather than Hebrew, contributed to this end. Human sacrifice was considered particularly efficacious.

The Adonis cult was the most popular feature of the Canaanite religion. This grew out of the belief that each autumn the god of fertility suffered death, was mourned by his sister or sweetheart and each springtime revived by ceremonies of sympathetic magic. The women prepared what they called "Gardens of Adonis" by planting grains, vegetables, and flowers in baskets of earth. When the plants began to grow they allowed them to dry and then tossed them into streams of water to bring back their god. Annual

wailing rites were carried on in many places. A third process of magic, practiced widely, was sacred prostitution. Some women were regular priestesses, consecrated to Ishtar. Others gave their bodies one day each year as an act of religious devotion. The ceremonies were supposedly removed from common lust or expressions of love, since strangers usually sought intercourse together. Women were frequently hired to foreigners before their marriage.¹⁰²

In the minds of the Canaanites sacred prostitution suggested no stigma, but to the Hebrews who preserved the high moral code of the desert it was sacrilege. Furthermore, Baal worship conveyed the idea of a multiplicity of gods, while they were moving steadily toward monotheism. Nevertheless, the native religion of Palestine presented a powerful appeal. If they were going to till the soil and live in cities, must they not worship as their neighbors did? Had not Omri and Ahab, two of their great kings, been sympathetic to the Baals? Elijah and Elisha had struggled mightily against this cult, but could not destroy it.

Hosea comes into this picture through his marriage, as many scholars believe, with Gomer who had possibly been

102

For a full account of the Canaanite religious beliefs and practices see Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 17-53.

a temple prostitute connected with the worship of Baal.¹⁰³

The dramatic quality of Hosea's message is considerably heightened by the assumption that his prophetic inspiration grew out of his own bitter experience. If he used allegory he did it most effectively. He saw no vision, nor was he subject to any ecstatic or psychic experience. He faced the realities of life and found God therein.

Yahweh is the husband of Israel. Hosea was commanded by Yahweh to take a wife of whoredom; so he married Gomer who bore him a son named Jezreel.¹⁰⁴ Evidently the name of this child is a reference to the destruction which Jehu brought upon the Baal-worshipping house of Ahab,¹⁰⁵ and by this sign the prophet challenged the religion of Canaan.

Israel must not call Yahweh בַּלְיָא, "my Baal" or "my owner," but אֲדָמִי, "my man" or "my husband."¹⁰⁶ Yahweh makes the solemn promise:

¹⁰³ Some, however, see no necessity in supposing that Gomer was unfaithful to her husband. See Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 567-69. For a brief and clear account of various theories see W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 349-51. Recent authorities who assume that Gomer had been a prostitute before her marriage and later went back to her profession are: Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 173-88; R. B. Y. Scott, The Revelance of the Prophets, pp. 74-75; and Norman H. Snaith, The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament, pp. 110-12.

¹⁰⁴ Hosea 1:2-5 ¹⁰⁵ II Kings 10:11

¹⁰⁶ Hosea 2:16 (2:18 in the Hebrew text)

And I will betroth thee unto me forever: yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in justice, and in loving kindness and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah.¹⁰⁷

Again he says:

Yet I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no god but me, and besides me there is no saviour.¹⁰⁸

Yahweh has been all things to Israel. The figure changes from a husband to a father who loved his son, called him out of Egypt, taught him to walk, preserved him, freed him, eased his burden and drew him with love.¹⁰⁹

The great concern of Hosea was to establish a bond which would draw Yahweh and his people together. This he found in mutual affection. "His was the earliest book," says Knudson, "in which religion is interpreted absolutely in terms of love."¹¹⁰

Israel is unfaithful to Yahweh. Hosea's domestic experience was a bitter one. His second child he named לֹא רַחֲמִים, "no mercy" or "not pitied"¹¹¹ and the third he called לֹא עַמִּי, "not my people."¹¹² Presumably Gomer had proven unfaithful to her husband by going back to her

¹⁰⁷ Hosea 2:19-20

¹⁰⁸ Hosea 13:4

¹⁰⁹ Hosea 11:1-4

¹¹⁰ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 91.

¹¹¹ Hosea 1:6

¹¹² Hosea 1:9

old habits of prostitution. These last children were not Hosea's.¹¹³

Just as Gomer had been unfaithful to Hosea, so Israel had become unfaithful to Yahweh. The people were guilty of three capital crimes.¹¹⁴ They had sought allegiance with Assyria and Egypt.¹¹⁵ They had depended upon their kings rather than upon their god.¹¹⁶ Above all, they had worshiped the Baals instead of Yahweh.¹¹⁷

As a result of this harlotry all have become adulterers.¹¹⁸ They no longer know Yahweh.¹¹⁹ Knowledge of truth and goodness are departed from the land.¹²⁰ The people revel in rebellion, lies and mischief.¹²¹ They are bent on backsliding.¹²²

Yahweh continues to love Israel. In spite of her infidelity, Hosea found that he continued to love Gomer. After she had left him he bought her back with the price of a slave and sheltered her from harlotry in his own house.¹²³ She might be led to regard her first husband as her own.¹²⁴

¹¹³ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 174.

¹¹⁴ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 92-94.

¹¹⁵ Hosea 5:13; 7:11

¹¹⁶ Hosea 8:4; 9:15; 10:3, 9; 7:7

¹¹⁷ Hosea 4:15; 8:11; 9:1

¹¹⁸ Hosea 7:4 ¹¹⁹ Hosea 5:4

¹²⁰ Hosea 4:1

¹²¹ Hosea 7:13-14 ¹²² Hosea 11:7

¹²³ Hosea 3:2-3

¹²⁴ Hosea 2:7

Hosea saw that Yahweh bore the same relation to Israel that he bore to his unfaithful wife. In mathematical terms the formula would be like this:

Yahweh : Israel :: Hosea : Gomer.

Yahweh will continue to woo Israel. He will speak words of comfort, security and hope.¹²⁵ He will gather his people from the nations wherein they have given themselves for hire.¹²⁶ He might punish them, but because of his nature he will not do so. He still loves Israel.

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I cast thee off, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboiim? My heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath.¹²⁷

Yahweh makes reasonable demands. Just as Hosea sought to win back the love of Gomer, so it was the purpose Yahweh to redeem Israel. But before the reconciliation could be complete the sinful people must show evidence of genuine response.

O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words and return unto Jehovah: say unto him; Take away all iniquity, and accept that which is good.¹²⁸

Goodness and not sacrifice, as Amos had said, and the knowledge of God are to be desired.

"Therefore turn to thy God: keep kindness and justice, and wait for thy God continually."¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Hosea 2:14

¹²⁶ Hosea 8:10

¹²⁷ Hosea 11:8-9

¹²⁸ Hosea 14:1-2

¹²⁹ Hosea 6:6

¹³⁰ Hosea 12:6

The people must labor to this end. They must till the soil of their souls. They must sow righteousness and reap kindness. In return Yahweh will bless them with life-giving rain.¹³¹

Israel must be disciplined. Gomer was to be hedged about with restraints until she should learn to appreciate the privileges of her own home.¹³² The mellowness of Hosea's character helped him to comprehend how Yahweh was endeavoring to teach Israel.¹³³

Yahweh will not be moved by wrath. Nevertheless, he will bring his trembling children away from the influence of Egypt and Assyria.¹³⁴ They must become fruitful for him and know that he is their god.¹³⁵

The glories of Ephraim are gone.¹³⁶ Lewdness is revealed in the sight of former lovers so that all may see.¹³⁷ Nothing shall be hidden, even from the children whose mother has gone astray.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Hosea 10:12

¹³² Hosea 2:6

¹³³ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, pp. 98-101.

¹³⁴ Hosea 11:9-11

¹³⁵ Hosea 2:21-23

¹³⁶ Hosea 9:11

¹³⁷ Hosea 2:10

¹³⁸ Hosea 2:2-5

Devouring fire,¹³⁹ days of visitation and recompense¹⁴⁰
and the destruction of false security in military prowess¹⁴¹
must be object lessons of instruction. In the end complete
reconciliation will come.

"And I will say to them that were not my people, Thou
are my people," Yahweh promises. "And they shall say,
Thou are my God."¹⁴²

5. Isaiah, the Prophet of Trust

Isaiah has been called "the most prominent of all the
prophetic circle,"¹⁴³ "the most regal of the prophets,"¹⁴⁴ "the
most majestic of all the prophets,"¹⁴⁵ "one of the grandest
figures of all time"¹⁴⁶ and "der Paulus des Alten Testamentes."¹⁴⁷
Almost every writer on this prophet phrases some superlative
which he adds to the already impressive list.

¹³⁹ Hosea 8:14

¹⁴⁰ Hosea 9:7

¹⁴¹ Hosea 11:14-15

¹⁴² Hosea 2:23b

¹⁴³ George A. Barton, The Religion of Israel, p. 101.

¹⁴⁴ John Edgar McFadyen, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 107.

¹⁴⁵ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 188.

¹⁴⁶ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 94.

¹⁴⁷ J. Meinhold, Jesaja und seine Zeit, p. 31 (cited by
Lorenz Dürr, Wollen und Werken der alttestamentlichen Propheten, p. 64.)

The name Isaiah, יְהִישָׁע , means "help of Yahweh" or "Yahweh is salvation." In a striking manner this appellation directs attention to that which contributed largely to making him great. For at least forty years, during one of the most troubled periods of Hebrew history, Isaiah was a counsellor of kings. Consistent, determined, patient, wise--he carried on when a lesser man might have flashed quickly across the horizon and then passed out of sight. He was endowed with a profound religious consciousness and an effective facility in poetic expression. Above all, his greatness depended upon the fact that he had a message to proclaim.

Like Amos, he was a native of Judah but, unlike both Amos and Hosea, he did his preaching in Jerusalem. His writing reflects an urban rather than a rural atmosphere. Because he enjoyed easy access to the king¹⁴⁸ and the priest¹⁴⁹ it has been supposed that he was a man of rank. He was married to a woman known as a prophetess¹⁵⁰ and had two sons. Possibly he inherited some means, since no mention is found of any employment. Being intensely interested in national affairs, he wrote a history of the kings of Judah and Israel,¹⁵¹ but the book has

¹⁴⁸ Isaiah 7:1ff

¹⁴⁹ Isaiah 8:2

¹⁵⁰ Isaiah 8:2

¹⁵¹ II Chronicles 26:22; 32:32

been lost. A tradition among the Jews ascribes his death to being sawn asunder during the evil reign of Manasseh,¹⁵² but the silence of the scriptures on this point argues against it.

In Isaiah's youth Uzziah was sitting on the throne of Judah, Jeroboam II on the throne of Israel, and Tiglathpileser III on the powerful throne of Assyria.¹⁵³ He was to witness the surging power of the east overwhelm the northern kingdom and threaten the southern. He was destined to steady the hands of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.

King Uzziah had reigned for fifty prosperous years, during which time the boundaries had been pushed back, much building done, and the national security strengthened. When he died in 739 B. C. Isaiah, who was then probably twenty or thirty years of age, seemed to sense the close of one age and the beginning of another. The king had died but Yahweh still ruled. In chapter six of the book bearing his name the prophet tells the story of how God became real to him. The atmosphere of the vision suggests that he may have been worshipping in the temple.

He saw the Lord sitting in awesome majesty upon his mighty throne. Glory pervaded the temple. Seraphs, fiery

¹⁵² S. R. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 206.

¹⁵³ See Driver, Ibid., p. 205 for a brief chronological table of this period.

serpent-like creatures, flew before him, being careful to cover their faces and their feet in his presence. They cried one to another in antiphonal response:

Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts:
The whole earth is full of his glory.¹⁵⁴

Isaiah was immediately conscious of his own sin and insufficiency as he measured himself by divine standards. He could not help but exclaim:

Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.¹⁵⁵

The third development of the rapidly moving scene was the cleansing which Isaiah experienced when one of the flying seraphs touched his lips with a burning coal taken with tongs from off the altar. The seraph said to him:

Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.¹⁵⁶

Then came a sense of mission. When the young prophet heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" he immediately responded, "Here am I; send me."¹⁵⁷ So he was instructed by the Almighty to carry his message to a people who were dull of mind and heart, to keep

¹⁵⁴ Isaiah 6:3

¹⁵⁵ Isaiah 6:5

¹⁵⁶ Isaiah 6:7

¹⁵⁷ Isaiah 6:8

on and on "until cities be laid waste without inhabitant, and houses be without man, and the land become utterly waste."¹⁵⁸ Nothing should ever deter him.

Finally in the holy seed, the remnant tenth,¹⁵⁹ there was hope for the future. In these five great conceptions---holiness, sin, cleansing, mission and promise---may be found a key, not only to Isaiah's own character, but also to the prophetic message which he courageously proclaimed. ויהי

Yahweh is holy. The exaltation of God was Isaiah's "almost constant theme."¹⁶⁰ The chant of the seraphs,

ויהי ויהי, seemed to keep ringing in his soul throughout his long life. One authority explains this refrain by saying:

His favorite adjective when speaking of God is holy: holiness in the Semitic languages was synonymous with glory (vi, 3), with awe inspiring majesty; in itself this term implied no idea of morality: all that was divine, inaccessible, beyond man's reach was holy.¹⁶¹

Men are to be brought low and only Yahweh shall be exalted.¹⁶² "God the Holy One" is exalted in Justice and in righteousness.¹⁶³ He will become "a crown of glory, and a

¹⁵⁸ Isaiah 6:11

¹⁵⁹ Isaiah 6:13

¹⁶⁰ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 129.

¹⁶¹ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 109.

¹⁶² Isaiah 2:11

¹⁶³ Isaiah 5:16

diadem of beauty."¹⁶⁴ To him prayers are made¹⁶⁵ and he responds by filling Zion with justice and righteousness.¹⁶⁶ Yahweh is all things to his people.

For Jehovah is our judge; Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king: he will save us.¹⁶⁷

Judah is sinful. Isaiah, like Hosea who preceded him, saw the nation through his personal experience. After confessing his own sin he said, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." To him the holiness of Yahweh was of great moral significance.¹⁶⁸ He accepted the principle of Amos that religion means righteousness.

The social evils of Judah in Isaiah's day were similar to those in Israel under the preaching of the two prophets just mentioned.¹⁶⁹ The long reign of Uzziah had been much like the Golden Age of Jeroboam II, with the same attendant evils. Concerning Judah and her capital Isaiah laments:

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly! They have forsaken Jehovah, they have despised the Holy One of Israel. . . How is the faithful city become a harlot! she that was full of justice! righteousness lodged in

¹⁶⁴ Isaiah 28:5

¹⁶⁵ Isaiah 33:2

¹⁶⁶ Isaiah 33:5

¹⁶⁷ Isaiah 33:22

¹⁶⁸ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, pp. 99-100.

¹⁶⁹ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 146.

blinded by passion, 100 to the future are made 100 and the present

is living with justice and righteousness, 100 and yet is

all things to his people.

For however it may seem; however it may appear,
 however in our eyes: we will save us, 100

Justice is blind, 100. Like those who preceded him,

and the rest, through the personal experience, 100

confessing his own sin to God, 100. It is the duty of a
 people of God to live, 100. To the thefulness of which we

of great moral significance, 100. He accepted the principle of

that that religion means righteousness.

The social evils of which in England's day were spoken

to those in Israel under the pressure of the law, 100

that mentioned, 100. The law of God had been given also

the golden age of Jerusalem, with the same spiritual evils.

Concerning them and the capital social lawless:

As a nation, a people God with integrity,
 need of evil-doers, children that God corruptly, 100
 have forsaken God, they have despised the law of
 of Israel, 100. You is the faithful gift before a nation;
 the first was full of justice: righteousness lodged in

100 Justice 100: 100 Justice 100: 100

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her, but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth bribes, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.¹⁷⁰

Robbery,¹⁷¹ drunkenness,¹⁷² love of luxury,¹⁷³ idolatry,¹⁷⁴ and the magical arts¹⁷⁵ are all under condemnation. The people are sick¹⁷⁶ because of these evils. They honor God with their lips, but their hearts are far from him.¹⁷⁷ A sorry picture.

Judah must be cleansed. Just as a flaming touch from the altar fires in Yahweh's presence had cleansed the lips and the soul of Isaiah, so the sin of the nation must be taken away by the power of the Almighty. This process would be painful, for the sin was great. Before the work could be accomplished Judah must almost perish. Isaiah was a prophet of doom.¹⁷⁸ Hear him cry out for Yahweh:

I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy alloy.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁰ Isaiah 1:4, 21-3

¹⁷¹ Isaiah 10:2

¹⁷² Isaiah 5:11, 22; 28:7

¹⁷³ Isaiah 3:16-26

¹⁷⁴ Isaiah 2:8

¹⁷⁵ Isaiah 2:8

¹⁷⁶ Isaiah 1:5-6

¹⁷⁷ Isaiah 29:13

¹⁷⁸ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, pp. 145-6.

¹⁷⁹ Isaiah 1:25

A day of Yahweh will bring down the proud and the mighty.¹⁸⁰ Woes must fall upon the wicked.¹⁸¹ Destruction is determined upon this people who are as the sands of the sea, a destruction "overflowing with righteousness."¹⁸² Because of their sin Jerusalem is ruined and Judah fallen.¹⁸³

The means of this redemptive punishment will be the enemies of Judah whom Judah governs. The Syrians before and the Philistines behind "shall devour Israel with open mouth."¹⁸⁴

Ho Assyria, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the street. Howbeit he meaneth not to do so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few.¹⁸⁵

Other nations will likewise suffer, and many of them will be completely destroyed,¹⁸⁶ but only Yahweh's people will learn of him.

Judah must trust Yahweh. Even while Isaiah announced doom he was preaching a constructive message. In receiving his divine commission he had heard these strange words:

180 Isaiah 2:12

182 Isaiah 10:22

184 Isaiah 9:12

186 Isaiah 14-23

181 Isaiah 3:10

183 Isaiah 3:8

185 Isaiah 10:5-7

Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again and be healed. . . . Until cities be waste without man, and the land become utterly waste, and Jehovah have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land.¹⁸⁷

This was not fatalism, for ancient mentality seemed unable to distinguish between what God wills and what he permits.¹⁸⁸ The dynamic doctrine which Isaiah was sent to proclaim in every situation and in spite of every obstacle was complete trust in Yahweh. This is illustrated in three great national crises.

In 734 B. C. the Syro-Ephraimitic war broke out. Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel conspired against Ahab who had recently ascended the throne of Judah. Jerusalem was in consternation. When Isaiah met his king just outside the city he advised him that since his two enemies were only "smoking firebrands" he need not fear. Before a newly born child should know the difference between good and evil the danger should be past. "If ye will not believe," he declared to Ahaz, "surely ye shall not be established."¹⁸⁹ Unfortunately

¹⁸⁷ Isaiah 6:9-12

¹⁸⁸ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 101-2.

¹⁸⁹ See Isaiah 7:1-17

the king was still fearful and appealed to Tiglathpileser of Assyria for aid, but Ahaz was obliged to deplete the temple treasury for a suitable gift.¹⁹⁰

A second crisis arose in 722 B. C. when the Assyrian power under Sargon overwhelmed the northern kingdom, captured Samaria after a siege of three years, carried away many into captivity, and replaced them with other peoples from the East.¹⁹¹ Damascus, capital of Syria, had also fallen,¹⁹² and the men of Judah feared that their own fate was drawing near. Isaiah insisted that while Jacob should suffer and become thin, he would not perish.¹⁹³ His many sins must be punished,¹⁹⁴ but he would live in and through Yahweh. It was foolish to trust in Egypt.¹⁹⁵ No armies, no battlements, no city walls could forestall disaster; only the god of salvation, whom the people had forgotten, was able to save them.¹⁹⁶

In that day will Jehovah of hosts become a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people; and a spirit of justice to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to him that turneth back the battle at the gate.¹⁹⁷

190 II Kings 16:7-9

192 Isaiah 17:1-3

194 Isaiah 28:1-4

196 Isaiah 17:10

191 II Kings 17

193 Isaiah 17:4-11

195 Isaiah 30:1-5

197 Isaiah 28:5-6

The third and greatest crisis threatened in 701 B. C. During the preceding years practically all of the neighbors of Judah had fallen before the armies of Assyria---Syria, Samaria and Egypt, as well as lesser nations. Now the great army of Sennacherib was before Jerusalem, and military legates had appeared demanding immediate surrender. King Hezekiah was prostrate with fear.¹⁹⁸ Isaiah, confident that Yahweh would preserve Jerusalem, cried out:

Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian, though he smite thee with the rod, and lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation against thee shall be accomplished and mine anger shall be directed to his destruction.¹⁹⁹

Isaiah promised further that Sennacherib should not enter Jerusalem, nor shoot an arrow there. He would be compelled to return.

For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.²⁰⁰

The great king had been hearing rumors of serious trouble elsewhere in his realm,²⁰¹ and when a plague broke out suddenly in his camp he hurriedly withdrew.²⁰² Jerusalem was saved and the faith of Isaiah vindicated!

¹⁹⁸ II Kings 19:1

¹⁹⁹ Isaiah 10:24-5

²⁰⁰ II Kings 19:34

²⁰¹ II Kings 19:7

²⁰² II Kings 19:35-6

This was one of the greatest moments in religious history, for if Jerusalem had fallen at that time all faith in Yahweh would doubtless have perished from the earth.²⁰³ Isaiah's message of trust has remained a testimony, not only to his own courage and spiritual insight, but to the assurances of the Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan religions.

In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.²⁰⁴

There is hope for the future. The sins of Judah will finally be purged²⁰⁵ and the people will learn, without meaningless ritual,²⁰⁶ to worship Yahweh of hosts who is "exalted in justice and sanctified in righteousness."²⁰⁷

A remnant of the people will remain to provide seed for a rejuvenated nation.²⁰⁸

The messiah will establish an ideal rule of righteousness.²⁰⁹

The spirit of peace will so pervade the earth²¹⁰ that the nations shall transform their implements of war into articles of usefulness.²¹¹

²⁰³ J. Skinner, Isaiah I-XLIX (Cambridge Bible), pp. xxi-xxii.

²⁰⁴ Isaiah 3-:15

²⁰⁵ Isaiah 1:18

²⁰⁶ Isaiah 1:11-17

²⁰⁷ Isaiah 5:16

²⁰⁸ Isaiah 1:9; 10:21, 22

²⁰⁹ Isaiah 11:1-5

²¹⁰ Isaiah 11:6-9

²¹¹ Isaiah 2:4

Jerusalem is to be restored until she is called "The city of righteousness, a faithful town,"²¹² and all will be well within her gates.²¹³

6. Micah, the Prophet of the People

Micah, a younger contemporary of Isaiah, is said to have prophesied in Judah during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.²¹⁴ Smith seriously questions any activity on his part during the reigns of the first two kings, basing his doubts upon the omission of any mention in Micah of the Syro-Ephraimitic war, of the appeal of Ahaz to Assyria, or of the deportations from Naphtali. He places this prophet after 734 B. C. and dates his major activity in 721 B. C. when Samaria was being overwhelmed.²¹⁵

It must be remembered, however, that Micah was a peasant and not particularly concerned with foreign affairs.²¹⁶ Like Amos, the shepherd prophet, he stressed the deep moral aspects of religion. His interest was centered in the meaning of God. In the midst of social evils, which had not changed

²¹² Isaiah 1:26

²¹³ Isaiah 33:17-24

²¹⁴ Micah 1:1

²¹⁵ J. M. P. Smith, Micah, Zephaniah and Nahum, (I. C. C.), pp. 19-20.

²¹⁶ John Edgar McFadyen, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 205.

since the preceding decades,²¹⁷ he spoke the mind of the common people. He is regarded as "the most genuine representative of what might be called democratic tendencies among the prophets."²¹⁸

Only the first three chapters of the book bearing his name are commonly credited to Micah.²¹⁹ The other four are post-exilic.²²⁰

Yahweh will deal with his people. The prophet announces for all to hear that Yahweh will descend from his holy place to tread upon and destroy the high places of the earth.²²¹ Like Isaiah, he is impressed with the majestic holiness of Israel's Lord. Yahweh does not send a messenger, but executes his own desires. He is god of the volcano. At his step the mountains and valleys melt as wax before the fire.

For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.²²²

Samaria and Judah alike, because of their idolatry and harlotry, are the objects of his devastating wrath. Evidently this section was written before 722 B. C.

²¹⁷ E. Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 175.

²¹⁸ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 113.

²¹⁹ George Buchanan Gray, A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 217.

²²⁰ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 589.

²²¹ Micah 1:1-7

²²² Micah 1:5

The prophet laments for Judah. Micah is an extremely sensitive soul who takes the wickedness of his countrymen to heart.²²³ Not Samaria alone, but Judah and even Jerusalem have sinned. Their wounds are incurable. Therefore he will go naked, wail, and roll in the dust because of their folly. He is ashamed for them and seeks to hide their dishonor from the Canaanites who dwell in neighboring villages. Although not personally responsible, he bears the common sin.

Injustice brings its penalty. Micah sees the evils of his time and knows that retribution must come.²²⁴

Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them away; and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.²²⁵

Such conditions can not continue. Unjust dealings bring evil times. Yahweh will take away the pride of the rebellious and cause them to lament their utter ruin.²²⁶ The law of cause and effect, which Amos had propounded, is operating in a new way within the nation.

Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your resting-place; because of uncleanness that destroyeth, even with a grievous destruction.²²⁷

²²³ Micah 1:8-16

²²⁴ Micah 2:1-11

²²⁵ Micah 2:1-2

²²⁶ Micah 2:4

²²⁷ Micah 2:10

The light of prophecy is threatened. Micah found, as have many others who dared to proclaim a message, that truth often goes unheeded. He struggled against two classes of people. There is no more forceful picture in all the scriptures than that of selfish unscrupulous rulers who consume the flesh of their victims, after having stripped of their skin, broken their bones and chopped them in pieces for the caldron.²²⁸ This will be the result:

Then they shall cry unto Jehovah, but he will not answer them; yea, he will hide his face from them at that time, according as they have wrought evil in their days.²²⁹

He struggled further against the false prophets who cried, "Peace," meaning that all was well.

Therefore it shall be night unto you, that ye shall have no vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down upon the prophets, and the day shall be black over them. And the seers shall be put to shame, and the diviners confounded; yea, they shall all cover their lips for there is no answer from God. But as for me, I am full of power by the Spirit of Jehovah, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.²³⁰

Micah possessed the true spirit of prophecy in that he spoke for his god. Neither spiritual ignorance, popular utterance, clairvoyance, nor divination could take the place of a message divinely implanted within the soul of a prophet.

²²⁸ Micah 3:1-3

²²⁹ Micah 3:4

²³⁰ Micah 3:6-8

Yahweh worship demands righteousness. There is no escape from this conclusion. The rulers may build up the nation through a perversion of justice, using blood and treachery to strengthen Jerusalem, the judges and the priests may seek for bribes, and the false prophets may divine for money, but when they have done so they can not lean upon their god and say:

Is not Jehovah in the midst of us? no evil shall come upon us.²³¹

Certain destruction is the consequence of any such conduct.²³² In his demand for social justice Micah reveals a close spiritual kinship with Amos,²³³ but he surpasses Amos in human sympathy.

7. Jeremiah, the Prophet of Inner Experience

The Prophet Jeremiah, like Isaiah before him, struggled to guide his nation in safety through a troubled forty year period. In many ways the task of Jeremiah was more complicated and more disheartening than that of Isaiah had been. He resisted a resurgence of heathenism, witnessed the rise and

²³¹ Micah 3:11

²³² Micah 3:12

²³³ Lorenz Dürr, Wollen und Wirken der alttestamentlichen Propheten, p. 89.

decline of enemy powers beside which Judah seemed helpless, and experienced the sickening impact of Jerusalem's fall. At the same time he kept warning the people of their sins and trying to find a basis for the enduring reality of godliness. His struggles made him strong. As one writer puts it:

Jeremiah was not a weeping willow, but a storm-tossed oak grown from a tender sapling. His sensitive spirit was torn between love for his people and fidelity to the truth of God. Inner strength came to him as he wrestled with God on the heights of an intense personal religion.²³⁴

Jeremiah was born about 650 B. C. during the evil reign of Manasseh. This king, who followed Hezekiah on the throne of Judah, revived Baal worship, copied the ways of Assyria, resorted to human sacrifice, practised magic and caused the people to sin.²³⁵ Amon, his son, was no better, but his reign was short.²³⁶

Jeremiah was a native of Anathoth, a village two miles and a quarter north-east of Jerusalem. Its desert outlook toward the Dead Sea seems to have made a vivid impression upon his sensitive nature.²³⁷ His father was

²³⁴ R. B. Y. Scott, The Relevance of the Prophets, p.80.

²³⁵ II Kings 21:1-18

²³⁶ II Kings 21:19-26

²³⁷ George Adam Smith, The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, pp. 315-16.

Hilkiah, a priest who may have traced his ancestry back to Abiathar of the house of Eli.²³⁸ His mind, however, was that of a prophet rather than of a priest, for before his birth he had been sanctified as a messenger of God.²³⁹ The teaching of Jeremiah may best be treated according to the historical periods into which his life naturally falls.²⁴⁰

Destiny is controlled by God and Man. Jeremiah began to prophesy about 626 B. C. This eventful year marked the death of Ashurbanipal, the last great Assyrian king, and the first threat of invasion by the Sythian barbarians from the north. In the following year Nabopolassar began the reorganization of the New Babylonian empire. The world was being shaken.

The young prophet saw two visions. The blossoming twig of an almond tree indicated to him that Yahweh is ever watchful to perform his will.²⁴¹ The boiling caldron showed him that the enemy might at any time overrun Judah.²⁴² These two visions seem to symbolize the message of Jeremiah.

²³⁸ Elmer A. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, p. 227.

²³⁹ Jeremiah 1:4-5

²⁴⁰ See Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 502-503, for an historical analysis of the book of Jeremiah,

²⁴¹ Jeremiah 1:11-12

²⁴² Jeremiah 1:13-19

For in fact this was all blossom and storm, beauty and terror, tender yearning and thunders of doom---up to the very end. Or to state the same more deeply: while the caldron of the North never ceased boiling out over his world---consuming the peoples, his own among them, and finally sweeping him into exile and night---he never, for himself or for Israel, lost the clear note of his first vision, that all was watched and controlled.²⁴³

In the next four chapters the significance of this theme becomes more clearly defined. The children of Israel were once holiness unto Yahweh,²⁴⁴ and he blessed them with freedom and a good land.²⁴⁵ Since of their own will they deserted their god²⁴⁶ to follow after the Baals²⁴⁷ with no sense of guilt, Yahweh will enter into judgment with them.²⁴⁸ He put Israel away because of her adultery,²⁴⁹ but her treacherous sister Judah has been even more evil.²⁵⁰ This situation is due to human wilfulness and may yet be remedied. The way is still open for reconciliation.

Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again unto me...Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you.²⁵¹

Blessing await a repentant Judah,²⁵² but the choice is hers. Already the alarms of war are sounded. Destruction

²⁴³ George Adam Smith, Jeremiah, p. 87.

²⁴⁴ Jeremiah 2:1-3 ²⁴⁵ Jeremiah 2:4-8 ²⁴⁶ Jeremiah 2:11

²⁴⁷ Jeremiah 2:23 ²⁴⁸ Jeremiah 2:35 ²⁴⁹ Jeremiah 3:8

²⁵⁰ Jeremiah 3:11 ²⁵¹ Jeremiah 3:1, 14

²⁵² Jeremiah 3:16-18; 4:1-4

is rampant. Desolation is sure.²⁵³ The Sythians, although not mentioned by name, are pictured as bringing terrors from the north.

The thought of Jeremiah is somewhat like that of Hosea; but whereas Gomer was brought back home and hemmed in, Judah is left free to pursue her own course. She is free, but Yahweh is also free to inflict the inevitable punishment for her sin. The fate of Judah is determined by the will of man and of God.

Outward reformation is futile. In 621 B. C., during the eighteenth year of the good king Josiah, while some repairs were being planned in the Jerusalem Temple, Hilkiah the high priest found a book of the law.²⁵⁴ The king was so impressed that he read it before all the people, made a covenant to keep its provisions and instituted a sweeping reform. This book, known to scholars as the core of Deuteronomy, is thought to have been 4:44 to 26:19 and Chapter 28.²⁵⁵ It required that all local shrines be eliminated, Jerusalem made the center of worship, and many humane practises introduced. It presented a lofty conception of God based upon the principle of love, and looked toward the unification of Judaism. This reinterpretation of the Mosaic law is thought to have been composed during the evil reign of Manasseh by

²⁵³ Jeremiah 4:5ff

²⁵⁴ II Kings 22-3

²⁵⁵ George Buchanan Gary, A Critical Introduction to The Old Testament, pp. 41-2.

members of the priestly party who had come under the influence of the eighth century prophets.²⁵⁶

At first Jeremiah seems to have welcomed the Deuteronomic Reform. He was directed to invite all to hear the words of this covenant and to utter curses upon those who would not listen.²⁵⁷ Soon he saw that the ills of the people were not being healed.²⁵⁸ There was no real repentance, only backsliding.²⁵⁹ The wise men and the scribes were put to shame because they trusted in the law.²⁶⁰ Wickedness continued as before.²⁶¹ Jeremiah had become disillusioned with legal methods of effecting righteousness.

Judah must repent. The power of Assyria was crumbling before the Babylonians. Nineveh had fallen in 612 B. C. In 608 B. C. Pharaoh Necho, eager to acquire a share of the plunder, started northward with a large army.²⁶² Josiah foolishly opposed him at Megiddo on the plains of Esdraelon and was slain in the battle which followed.²⁶³ Jeremiah and all of Judea and Jerusalem lamented for their king.²⁶⁴ The

²⁵⁶ George A. Barton, The Religion of Israel, pp. 114-21.

²⁵⁷ Jeremiah 11:1-8 ²⁵⁸ Jeremiah 6:14 ²⁵⁹ Jeremiah 8:4-7

²⁶⁰ Jeremiah 8:8-13 ²⁶¹ Jeremiah 5:20-31

²⁶² George Adam Smith, Jeremiah, pp. 161-64.

²⁶³ II Kings 23:29 ²⁶⁴ II Chronicles 35:24-5

prophet is squarely confronted with the problem of suffering and asks Yahweh to explain why the wicked prosper.²⁶⁵

About this time, possibly driven on by national evidences of Yahweh's disfavor, Jeremiah took his stand at the Temple gate and delivered his severest invectives against the sins of Judah.²⁶⁶

Will ye steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name and say, We are delivered; that we may do all these abominations. Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah.²⁶⁷

Jerusalem shall be as desolate as Shiloh because the people persist in doing evil and worshipping only in meaningless ritual.²⁶⁸ It is still not too late for them to amend their ways and enjoy the favor of Yahweh,²⁶⁹ but this they will not do.²⁷⁰ Even^{though} the people refused to listen, Jeremiah was convinced that the only salvation for the nation was in a thorough repentance.

The leaders were so indignant that Jeremiah almost lost his life. He was saved only when the people remembered

²⁶⁵ Jeremiah 12:1-6 ²⁶⁶ Jeremiah 7:1-8:3 ²⁶⁷ Jeremiah 7:8-11
²⁶⁸ Jeremiah 7:12-26 ²⁶⁹ Jeremiah 7:1-7 ²⁷⁰ Jeremiah 7:27-8

Suffering is a part of religion. Josiah was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz. After three months Necho found him unsatisfactory, levied tribute on Judah, and installed Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, as king.²⁷² He also followed in the evil ways of Manasseh, showing that the Deuteronomic Reform had spent its force. After the battle of Carchemish in 605 B. C., "one of the turning points in the world's history,"²⁷³ Babylon continued to expand and Egypt to diminish. Jehoiakim became subject to Nebuchadnezzar. In 597 B. C., during the brief reign of the weak and youthful Jehoiachin, who was next in line, the Babylonian monarch disciplined Judah. He robbed the Temple of its treasures and carried away the king and seven thousand people, in what was known as the First Captivity, to Babylon.²⁷⁴

During this gloomy period Jeremiah foresaw the certainty of destruction. He cried out against Jehoiakim, who built upon unrighteousness and blood,²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ Jeremiah 26:1-19

²⁷² II Kings 23:31-37

²⁷³ Henry Preserved Smith, Old Testament History, pp. 282-3.

²⁷⁴ II Kings 23:31-37

²⁷⁵ Jeremiah 22:24-30

and against Jehoiachin who played blindly into the hands of the Babylonians.²⁷⁶ He kept telling kings and people the inevitable result of their wrongdoing.

The heart of the prophet was so torn between love for his nation and loyalty to his God that he experienced the bitterest kind of suffering. To make matters worse, everyone refused to listen. Although gentle as a lamb, his life and good name were threatened by the men of his own village.²⁷⁷ The people determined to slander him and give no heed to his words until he cried out to Yahweh for their punishment.²⁷⁸ He pleaded for the righteousness of Yahweh to sustain him,²⁷⁹ but when a chief priest smote him and placed him in stocks he bitterly cursed the day of his birth.²⁸⁰

While Jeremiah was unable to gain any public hearing he dictated his messages to Baruch, the scribe, who preserved them in writing. When the scroll came into the hands of Jehoiakim he was so incensed that he slashed it with a knife and burned it.²⁸¹ Thereupon the prophet dictated a longer edition which, after some reediting by Baruch, became a

²⁷⁶ Jeremiah 22:24-30

²⁷⁷ Jeremiah 11:19-23

²⁷⁸ Jeremiah 18:18-23

²⁷⁹ Jeremiah 12:1-3

²⁸⁰ Jeremiah 20

²⁸¹ Jeremiah 36

part of the present book of Jeremiah.²⁸²

The suffering which Jeremiah underwent became an indirect but an essential part of his prophetic message. He demonstrated its meaning as much by agony of soul as by the utterance of words. Because of his sensitive nature religion became personal with him. He established the truth that each individual with any spiritual discernment must wrestle with the evil about him or within him and stand in the presence of a righteous god. Neither can be accomplished without a struggle. They call for tears and blood.

There is a New Covenant. After Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin to Babylon he made Zedekiah, a brother of Jehoiakim, king in his stead. Zedekiah was young and weak. In the eleventh year of his reign he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar who laid siege to Jerusalem and captured it.²⁸³ The end of Judah had come. This was in 586 B. C. Gedaliah was made temporary governor, but soon murdered. Confusion followed. Many of the prominent people were carried away to Babylon and other fled to Egypt. Jeremiah was among the latter.

In the midst of these fearful days Jeremiah kept

²⁸² Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 505-6.

²⁸³ Jeremiah 26

pleading for repentance and warning that the nation would be destroyed. He was torn between weariness,²⁸⁴ joy,²⁸⁵ and heart-rending despair.²⁸⁶ Frequently his actions were symbolical, as when he broke an earthen jar in the valley of Hinnom to dramatize the impending destruction of Judah²⁸⁷ and wore bands and bars on his neck in warning of the bondage to come.²⁸⁸ He meditated upon the significance of a potter reshaping soft clay in his hands, and wondered how Yahweh might restore Judah.²⁸⁹

To the very end he believed that there was hope, providing the people would listen. While in prison he had faith enough in the future to buy a field.³⁹⁰ When Jeremiah was taken up out of a dungeon where he had suffered many days he told King Zedekiah with confidence that his house and the city would be saved if he would go peaceably to Nebuchadnezzar.²⁹¹ The king was afraid to disregard his other counsellors. Who knows how different the later course of Hebrew history might have been if Zedekiah had taken Jeremiah's advice!

The final answer to Jeremiah's problem came to him in his conception a New Covenant. Before that time the

284	Jeremiah 20:9	285	Jeremiah 5:16	286	Jeremiah 23:9
287	Jeremiah 19:1-13	288	Jeremiah 27	289	Jeremiah 18
290	Jeremiah 32	291	Jeremiah 38		

relationship between Yahweh and his people had been thought of in terms of the nation.²⁹² Now it becomes a matter of individual experience.

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.²⁹³

For the most part Jeremiah built upon the theological and religious conceptions of his prophetic predecessors.²⁹⁴ Like them, he stressed sins of the nation and the impending doom which would come as a result. But he surpassed them all in discovering a basis upon which the spirit of a shattered nation could survive. This revelation of a personal faith, clarified by the striking nature of his physical and spiritual sufferings, brought his message to an effective climax. Here is the high point of Old Testament prophecy.²⁹⁵

²⁹² Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, p. 284.

²⁹³ Jeremiah 31:31-4

²⁹⁴ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 128.

²⁹⁵ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 201.

CHAPTER II

POST-EXILIC PROPHECY

1. The History of the Exile

The destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, attended by the eclipse of national sovereignty and the exile of the leading citizens, was the greatest trial through which the Hebrew nation had ever passed. Distressing as the physical suffering may have been, the catastrophe was primarily a spiritual one.¹ When the Children of Israel escaped from Egypt there was the stimulus of loyalty to a new god and the satisfaction of learning his ways. Although prophet after prophet had warned them of impending doom, the people were not prepared for the final blow which severed all of them from their Holy of Holies, and many of them from their homeland. Yahweh, their god, had hidden his face. The unity of their nation was gone. The foundations of their world had crumbled. How could they live, and in what could they believe?

The immediate events leading to Jerusalem's fall may be passed over quickly here.² Because Zedekiah rebelled against

¹ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets, pp. 143-44.

² The biblical accounts may be found in Jeremiah 21:1-10; 34; 37; 38; 52; II Kings 25:1-21; II Chronicles 36:11-21.

Babylon and sought the favor of Egypt Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the city for a year and a half. The people grew weak from famine. At last the walls were broken down and every important building burned. The temple was plundered and destroyed. Zedekiah and a part of his army fled toward Jericho, but they were captured. The victors slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, then blinded him and took him in chains to Babylon.

In accord with his general policy Nebuchadnezzar had a part of the newly conquered people moved to Babylonia. In all there were three transportations---in 597 B. C., in 586 and in 581. The first of these seems to have included many prominent people who were not mentioned during the crisis when Jerusalem fell. The second and third transportations took still more of the political and religious leaders.

The numbers of those carried away into captivity was probably not as large as has sometimes been supposed. Lofthouse, after a careful analysis of the population of Palestine and Jerusalem at different times, estimates that there may have been 225,000 people living there in 597 B. C. As many as 50,000 could have been taken to Babylon and three fourths of the inhabitants allowed to remain.³

³ W. F. Lofthouse, Israel After the Exile, p. 2.

Lods thinks that the population of Judah was about 90,000 and that some 20,000 people were taken away to Babylon.⁴ This would also mean that about three-fourths of the population stayed in the homeland.

Life in Babylon, Egypt and Palestine. No undue physical hardships were imposed upon the people as they made their journey to Babylon.⁵ They were even allowed to take many of their belongings with them. Upon their arrival they settled together in specified communities, entered into business, acquired property and conducted their private lives as they desired. They were a transplanted people, but not slaves.

The Jews in Babylon underwent a profound psychological change. In the first place, they came naturally to feel that they were the sole defenders and preservers of the faith. In the second place, finding themselves in the midst of great cities where there were temples more magnificent than they had ever seen and ruled by a government which nothing seemed able to shake, they were compelled to rethink the meaning of their own life and religion.

⁴ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 174.

⁵ Ibid., p. 177. This conclusion is reached by examination of bas-reliefs now in the Louvre.

Assyria and Egypt had been crushed. Babylon was at her height. Commerce, culture, and religion all reflected the glory of the new world power. If the gods had been so kind to Babylon, the Jews were compelled to ask themselves, would it not be well for them to adopt the ways of the victor nation? Nevertheless, they continued to love and long for their homeland, as hymns of the period show.⁶ Babylon may have been wonderful, but in their eyes it was godless. Temples to Marduk were not their own Holy of Holies. Gardens of Adonis were not the "mountains of Israel." For the most part, the exiles continued to be strangers in a strange land. Lamentations, some of the Psalms, and parts of Deutero-Isaiah give expression now to sorrow, now to longing, rage, and prayerful expectation of deliverance. The people were homesick.

Despite all the failures of the past there was still much religious stability. As in the days of Elijah when 7,000 faithful had never bowed their knees to Baal, so in this time of testing there were many devout souls whose religion was very real. It would seem that their trial brought out much latent good within them. Here are some of the developments

⁶ Psalms 42 and 43.

which were to exert a tremendous influence on later Judaism:⁷

1) They had their faith in Yahweh who, in their eyes, was far superior to any god of Babylon. 2) They could practice circumcision and observe their holy days, including the sabbath. 3) They were beginning to form a sacred canon. Writings already in existence were treasured more highly than before, and others were in the process of composition. 4) In the absence of the temple they were learning a new kind of worship with emphasis upon prayer, instruction and religious conversation. These found expression in the synagogue. 5) The Law began to thrive in a new soil. As recently as 621 B. C., in the days of Josiah, a legal code known as Deuteronomy, was recognized as the official standard for Judaism. The book was subject to development, and much of it could not apply to Babylonian surroundings, but it marked the beginning of a movement of which the completed Torah was the final result. Emphasis on the old temple stimulated longing for a new one, and love for Yahweh kept the people free from idolatry in a strange land.

It was in Babylon that the New Judaism came into being. There spiritual discipline developed an exclusiveness which

guaranteed the preservation of the ancient traditions, even while new processes of thought were being formulated. Dreams of release stimulated hope, while the deepening necessity of religious stability led to the practice of piety.⁸ This latter may be defined as a closer sense of relationship with God. The movement was social, as well as individual. It demanded dependence upon Yahweh, obedience to his law, and confidence in his leadership. Displaced Jews responded, in spite of all their frustrations, because they still clung to the assurance that they were Yahweh's chosen people. They believed that the day was not far distant when wrongs would be righted and they should come into their own.

The Jews who dwelt in Babylon had been taken by military authority, but those who found their way into Egypt went of their own free will. They settled at Elephantine where a community had recently been established, possibly by Jewish mercenaries of Psammatik II.⁹ A temple to Yahweh was soon built there.¹⁰ After the murder of Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had left as ruler of Judah, Johanan led a

⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

⁹ George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible,

¹⁰ Ismar J. Peritz, Old Testament History, pp. 219-20.

considerable company into the borders of Egypt.¹¹ There they were accorded privileges which their brethren in Babylon could not know. While a lesser power than Babylon, Egypt was enjoying peace and an enviable prosperity. Assyria no longer troubled her, and after the battle of Carchemish, in which the Babylonians defeated Pharaoh Necho, she was left without interference. It was natural, then, that Egypt might seem a welcome haven for disillusioned Jews.

Jeremiah went to Egypt under protest. He felt that Jews should not cut themselves off from the land of Judah and was fearful that few of those who migrated southward would ever see their old homes again.¹² He seemed to sense the spiritual and political weaknesses which might accompany allegiance to the land of their former bondage. For strong spirits, the maintenance of religious ideals in Babylon or in Jerusalem would mean a strengthening of the moral fibre; but for weak spirits an easier life in Egypt would almost certainly lead to complacency.

As time went on Egyptian Jews seemed completely untouched by the law of Deuteronomy. As they grew unfamiliar with Hebrew they translated their scriptures into the Greek Septuagint. Philo and Apollos, two of their greatest leaders,

¹¹ Jeremiah 43

¹² Jeremiah 42

were hardly men like the prophets. They came to believe in monotheism, but at one time did not object to heathen images. While they remained nominally loyal to their homeland there was never among them a widespread eagerness to return.

While Jerusalem was largely in ruins, the rest of Palestine seems not to have suffered greatly at the hands of the Babylonians.¹³ The peasants were encouraged to gather their crops as usual.¹⁴ Although many of the people who remained were of the lower classes, there were also priests¹⁵ and elders.¹⁶ The lot of these survivors was hard.¹⁷ Neighboring enemy tribes, especially the Edomites, kept filtering in and taking advantage of them.¹⁸ Commerce was stagnant. Prices were high, comforts few, and discouragement general.

In the main, Nebuchadnezzar had dealt with Judah as Sargon had done with Samaria---disbanding the government, carrying away the leading citizens, and setting up a military government. There was one important difference. Whereas Sargon had replaced the exiles with other nationals,

¹³ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 174-76.

¹⁴ Jeremiah 40:10 ¹⁵ Lamentations 2:10 ¹⁶ Lamentations 1:4

¹⁷ W. F. Lofthouse, Israel After the Exile, p. 18.

¹⁸ Lamentations 5

Nebuchadnezzar gave orders that Judah should be left to the peasantry of the country.¹⁹ Gedaliah, whom he appointed governor, was a Jew. The people of Judah, therefore, remained Jewish in race as well as in tradition.

Worship in some form seems to have continued uninterrupted. The story of how, after the destruction of Jerusalem, men from Samaria came to the temple site to sacrifice²⁰ shows that the Josianic reform had produced a lasting effect, even in the north. Jerusalem was still considered a central place of worship.

Welch believes that in Nehemiah 10 there is preserved a pact of Israel and Judah to preserve worship in Jerusalem during the exile.²¹

Marriage with foreigners was forbidden. Trade was forbidden on new moons and sabbaths. The seventh year was sanctified. Sacred seasons were recognized. Arrangements were made regarding sacrifices on the temple site, and instructions were given for first fruits and heave offerings. This authority writes:

In my judgment, the document is one of the earliest of those bearing on the period which we possess, and it

¹⁹ Adam C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, pp. 64-5.

²⁰ Jeremiah 41:5ff.

²¹ Welch, op. cit., p. 69.

shows the first effort at the reconstruction of the temple-cult to have been made by the remnant Judeans and the loyalist Israelites in combination. The men deliberately resolved to continue the unity which had been the outcome of the Josianic reform on its religious side.²²

In the eyes of the orthodox, Babylon was the chief center of Judaism, and Egypt was the second.²³ It would seem, however, that the humble people who continued to live in Palestine found a large place in their lives for loyalty to Yahweh.

The Liberation under Cyrus. In 546 B. C. Cyrus, who for some years had distinguished himself as king of Anshan in Elam, just east of Babylonia, became ruler of Persia. Three years later he defeated Astyages and acquired Media. He defeated Croesus of Lydia in 540 B. C., and in 538 became master of Babylon. The Cylinder of Cyrus describes the events.²⁴ Some men of Akkad were slain; Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon fled; and the army of Cyrus made a triumphal entry in the midst of joy and rejoicing.

Many Babylonians had been dissatisfied with Nabonidus

²² Adam C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, p. 85.

²³ W. F. Lofthouse, Israel After the Exile, p. 14.

²⁴ Samuel A. B. Mercer, Extra-Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History, pp. 61-2. See also J. Skinner, Isaiah (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges), p. xvii. and George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible, pp. 445-6.

because he had introduced the worship of many gods in an effort to ward off threats from Cyrus. Cyrus immediately became a protector of the established religion.²⁵ Not having a large army he tried in every way to avoid unrest and insurrection. In accord with this policy he granted new freedoms to many groups which had been under Babylonian domination. This was a tremendous encouragement to the Jews, for they saw in it the possibility of an early return to Palestine.

At last, in 538 B. C., the decree of liberation came.²⁶ There were said to have been 42,360 of the exiles who availed themselves of the opportunity to go back to the homeland.²⁷ They were carefully enumerated by families. It is evident that many who were well established in Babylon were content to remain there, for the time being, at least, and to give their moral support and material help to the travellers. A prosperous Jewish colony remained in Mesopotamia.²⁸

The Rebuilding of the Temple. One of the first tasks which awaited the exiles upon their return home was rebuilding

²⁵ Adam C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, pp. 89-90.

²⁶ Ezra 1:1-5 ²⁷ Ezra 2:64; Nehemiah 7:66

²⁸ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 187-88.

the Jerusalem temple. Although the biblical account gives the impression that Cyrus gave explicit directions for the work, it is probable that he simply left the people free to plan their religious activities as they wished.²⁹ No Persian record suggests any other policy. It is also quite likely that when Sheshbazzar appeared in Jerusalem he did so for the primary purpose of becoming the local Persian governor, and not to bring the decree or to return the temple treasures.

Welch is of the opinion that there was already considerable religious interest on the part of Jerusalem Jews who were ready to push the work of building as the way opened, but that jealousies quickly sprang up because the returning exiles considered themselves more orthodox. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, he maintains, having been written by Priestly hands, erroneously gives the impression that the responsibilities were all borne by the faithful from Babylon.³⁰ The result of the quarrel³¹ was that the successor of Cyrus ordered the work to stop. After the foundations were laid

²⁹ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, A History of Israel, Vol. II, p. 75 ff.

³⁰ Adam C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, p. 98 ff.

³¹ Ezra 4

nothing more was done for eighteen years.

In 520 B. C., after the arrival of other Babylonian Jews, the work was resumed. Joshua, the priest, and Zerubbabel, a princely aspirant to the throne, as well as the two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, were active in urging completion of the structure. Zerubbabel was quietly eliminated by the Persian police because of his political aspirations.³² The temple was dedicated in 516 B. C.

Nehemiah and Ezra. Few records have been preserved from the next half century. It is reasonable to suppose that Persian governors ruled in Palestine, that some religious observances were carried on in the new temple and that the Babylonian party exerted a predominant influence. The very lack of data suggests that the zeal of 520 to 516 B. C. was, for the most part, gone. The last nine chapters of Isaiah, probably written during this period, indicate that there was considerable paganism and some idolatry. Malachi, also from these years, pictures laxity in worship and offerings, carelessness of priests, exploitation, immorality and frequent divorce.³³

³² Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 606.

³³ W. F. Lofthouse, Israel After the Exile, p. 177.

Nehemiah, one of the dominant and most capable characters of the Old Testament, brought a new sense of unity and accomplishment to Jerusalem. While cup-bearer in the court of Artaxerxes he heard from Hanani, who had just returned from the Holy City, of the sad plight of the people there.

The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.³⁴

Nehemiah was so moved that he prayed earnestly to the Lord and soon secured permission for an extended leave of absence from Babylon to lead in the work of reconstruction. Artaxerxes was good enough to give him letters of safe conduct and orders for timbers and other building materials.³⁵

Rebuilding the wall was not easy. The genius of Nehemiah appears in the manner in which he was able to visualize the whole undertaking, inspire the pride and cooperation of Jerusalem citizens, go ahead in the face of taunts and threats, supervise the people in their work and bring the undertaking to a successful conclusion.

Such an accomplishment would naturally mean a revival of religious interest. Racial purity, adherence to the law of Deuteronomy and the importance of the priesthood were stressed.

³⁴ Nehemiah 1:3

³⁵ Nehemiah 2:7-8

Nehemiah returned to Babylon but soon was back in Jerusalem again pressing the reforms which were then beginning to lag.

Ezra the scribe was invaluable in the work of reform. The first impression from the biblical account is that he preceded Nehemiah in Jerusalem and later was contemporary with him there. More careful examination reveals the strong probability that this was not the case. According to the revised chronology. Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in 444 B. C. and Ezra followed almost fifty years later in 397 B. C.³⁶

Ezra, like Nehemiah, taught the necessity of freedom from intermarriage. He insisted that temple worship be carried out in a continuous, proper and adequate manner. He was interested, not in the humanitarian, but in the legal aspects of the Deuteronomic law. Ezra pressed for reforms farther than Nehemiah had done, but he could have accomplished little without the foundations of his predecessor. Having no governmental authority back of him, he accomplished his ends by religious zeal and by persuasion. Force, in itself, could hardly have induced some hundreds of men to divorce their foreign wives, the people generally to pay more liberally for the support of the temple priests and all to maintain

³⁶ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 120-25.

a devout interest in worship and ritual.

There were several notable results of the reform under Ezra, the first of which was the establishment of the Priestly Code. This body of laws seems to have had its beginning between the completion of the temple in 516 B. C. and the coming of Nehemiah, while Judah was a Persian province.³⁷ The Persians tolerated no independent political action on the part of their subjects, but did not interfere with any religious activities. The Priestly school, therefore, set about to create

. . . a holy nation of the Jews, a church within the empire, a Kingdom of God realized, not in a future Messianic Age, but in the present.³⁸

The Priestly Code provides an orderly arrangement of historical and religious teaching which stresses the majesty of Yahweh, the sabbath, dietary laws, circumcision, the passover, temple worship, and ceremonial cleanliness. Its style is dry and monotonous with much attention given to details. "Ye shall be holy, for I Jehovah, your god, am holy"³⁹ is the underlying principle. The Priestly writers gave the final touch to the legal and historical sections of the Old

³⁷ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 256.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 190.

³⁹ Leviticus 19:2

Testament.

Concerning this new emphasis Lofthouse writes:

Ezra's establishment of the law was the first great triumph of Judaism. . . . The piety which had longed for the restoration of the sacrifices on the hallowed spot in Jerusalem had. . . learnt to maintain itself without the help of an altar. Thus, after Ezra, one part of the Jewish people gave itself up, with a zeal hitherto unknown, to obedience to the ritual law; another in Palestine, as well as in Babylon, knew that Yahweh could be approached most surely in other ways, and that sins for which sacrifice could not atone might gain forgiveness through repentance and contrition.⁴⁰

A second result of Ezra's triumph was a burdensome increase in taxation. Added to the levies of the Persian government were the demands of the clergy, temple maintenance, sacrifice, redemption of first-born children, and other assessments. The further impoverishment of an already poor community led to considerable discontent.

A third result of Ezra's work was the Samaritan Schism, located by Lofthouse at this time rather than during the earlier age of Nehemiah.⁴¹ Political, religious, and racial tensions had been increasing between Judea and Samaria. When Sanballat was governor of Samaria under Darius IV his daughter was given in marriage to Manasseh, brother of the Jewish high-priest. Jerusalem Jews demanded that the marriage be annulled.

⁴⁰ W. F. Lofthouse, Israel After the Exile, p. 32.

⁴¹ Loc. cit.

Sanballat made the counter proposal that he build a temple on Mt. Gerizim, the site of the old Samaritan sanctuary, and see that Manasseh was appointed high-priest. Manasseh readily accepted, providing eloquent evidence of the religious discontent in Jerusalem at that time. So the rival temple was build and a division created in Judaism which has never been healed. The newly organized community accepted and have since clung to the Pentateuch, recognizing no other sacred scriptures.

The development of the Hebrew faith before the exile has been compared to a stream which grows in breadth and depth as various tributaries flow into it. Each individual prophet made his own distinctive contribution to the body of religious understanding. After the exile that stream, like the mighty Mississippi on its delta plain, spreads out in separate courses, each fed by the same current and moving in the same general direction. Three of these might be named Legalism, Prophecy, and Apocalypse. The first has been lightly touched upon in connection with the work of Ezra. The second, which is a continuation of the main stream flowing on from Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, is being followed to its Old Testament completion in this chapter. The third will be considered in the next two chapters.

2. Deutero-Isaiah, Chapters 40-55. 549-538 B. C.

The sixteen chapters, commonly known as Deutero-Isaiah, lay no claim to have been written by the son of Amoz who completed his work one hundred and thirty-five years before the exile. Wardle says:

. . . no critical conclusion is more certain that they belong to a later period.⁴²

Nearly a century ago Gesenius set down convincing arguments to substantiate this division, and since his death archaeological discoveries bearing on the days of Cyrus, together with the constructive studies of Cheyne in England and Duhm in Germany, have completely established this conclusion.⁴³ Scholars, with only a few exceptions, place the composition of Deutero-Isaiah within the decade preceding 538 B. C.⁴⁴

The prophet may have written from Egypt, Phoenicia, or Palestine, but he probably was in Babylon among the exiles who were anticipating an early return. At any rate, he viewed

⁴² W. L. Wardle, Isaiah XL-LXVI (Peake's Commentary on the Bible), p. 460.

⁴³ Owen C. Whitehouse, Isaiah 40-66 (The New Century Bible), pp. 29-30.

⁴⁴ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, p. 262.

the world with a wide perspective. His own spiritual genius and the idealism of the times enabled him to give expression to conceptions of unparalleled significance.

Israel is forgiven. The writer introduces his message with an assurance of hope. The threats of doom which had been sounded for more than two centuries give way to confident expectation of a better day in the immediate future. The exile is almost over. Israel has more than paid for her follies.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her that
her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all
her sins.⁴⁵

This is a new note in prophetic teaching. Yahweh has not changed, and his abhorrence of evil is no less; but the sufferings of Israel have made her acceptable once more.

Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.⁴⁶

Yahweh is even more thoughtful for Israel than is a mother for her child.⁴⁷ He regards her as a bride,⁴⁸ and will be both a husband and a redeemer to her.⁴⁹ She is now honorable in his eyes.⁵⁰ Comforts await Israel since she has drunk at Yahweh's hand the cup of his wrath.⁵¹ Jerusalem shall be a

45 Isaiah 40:1-2 46 Isaiah 48:10 47 Isaiah 49:15
48 Isaiah 49:18 49 Isaiah 54:5 50 Isaiah 49:5
51 Isaiah 51:17-22

pure and holy city wherein the former captives may dwell.⁵²

Break forth into joy, sing together, for Jehovah hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.⁵³

No such affliction shall ever fall upon Israel again, any more than waters of a flood shall cover the earth.⁵⁴

Yahweh's lovingkindness shall never depart from her. Peace, righteousness, and the knowledge of Yahweh shall flourish in the midst of her.⁵⁵

Yahweh reigns supreme. Deutero-Isaiah is the first prophet to teach absolute monotheism. He begins by presenting Yahweh as the sole creator.

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?⁵⁶

In frequent shorter passages the theme of Yahweh's creative power is brought back as a recurring refrain. He stretched forth the heavens and the earth and gave breath to mankind.⁵⁷ His own hand fashioned these wonders.⁵⁸ He laid the foundations of the earth⁵⁹ and established it to be inhabited.⁶⁰

⁵² Isaiah 52:1-2

⁵³ Isaiah 52:9 ⁵⁴ Isaiah 54:9

⁵⁵ Isaiah 54:11-17

⁵⁶ Isaiah 40:12-14 ⁵⁷ Isaiah 42:5

⁵⁸ Isaiah 45:12

⁵⁹ Isaiah 48:13; 15:13 ⁶⁰ Isaiah 45:18

There is absolutely no other god but Yahweh, as Israel must testify.

Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there is no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God. Yea, since the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who can hinder it?⁶¹

This refrain is also reechoed frequently through Deutero-Isaiah. There is no other god besides Yahweh.⁶² There is none else.⁶³ There is not even any one like him.⁶⁴ He is the beginning and the end of all things.⁶⁵ He is greater than his own creation.⁶⁶ He performs his own will.⁶⁷

How foolish idolatry is before such a god as this! Yet men persist in carving out images from metal and wood.⁶⁸ They only deceive themselves. No image can possibly represent him.⁶⁹ Since Yahweh is the creator of righteousness⁷⁰ he will bring salvation to Israel for his own glory.⁷¹ Salvation, as an expression of divine grace, springs from the righteousness

⁶¹ Isaiah 43:10-13	⁶² Isaiah 44:6-8	⁶³ Isaiah 47:8; 45:14, 18
⁶⁴ Isaiah 46:9	⁶⁵ Isaiah 45:6	⁶⁶ Isaiah 40:15, 22
⁶⁷ Isaiah 46:10	⁶⁸ Isaiah 44:12-17	⁶⁹ Isaiah 40:18-20
⁷⁰ Isaiah 45:8	⁷¹ Isaiah 46:12-13	

of Yahweh.⁷² Although his ways are far beyond the attainment of men,⁷³ he is concerned with their welfare.⁷⁴

Israel will be free. The exile is almost over. Freedom is at hand. Yahweh will bring about Israel's release.

Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.⁷⁵

The means of this deliverance is to be Cyrus. Twice he is mentioned by name, first, as Yahweh's "shepherd" who will perform all his pleasure in promising the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple⁷⁶ and second, as his "anointed" who is led of Yahweh to subdue the nations before him.⁷⁷ These conceptions manifestly spring from prophetic idealism,⁷⁸ but they are intended to express confidence in Yahweh rather than in the new king of Persia. Cyrus, as Israel's deliverer, is indirectly referred to in other places. Yahweh has loved him and called him to overwhelm Babylon.⁷⁹ He has raised him up

⁷² Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 256.

⁷³ Isaiah 40:22-23 ⁷⁴ Isaiah 40:11; 51:5

⁷⁵ Isaiah 40:3-5 ⁷⁶ Isaiah 44:28 ⁷⁷ Isaiah 45:1

⁷⁸ Knudson, op. cit., p. 267.

⁷⁹ Isaiah 48:14

in righteousness to rebuild Jerusalem and free the exiles.⁸⁰
 He shall learn to worship Yahweh,⁸¹ for he is called for Jacob's
 sake to usher in the knowledge of God.⁸²

As has already been pointed out, Cyrus was interested
 in the political stability of his newly-won empire, and actually
 did nothing to support the religion of the Hebrews.⁸³
 Nevertheless, the freedom which he offered was in such contrast
 to the oppression of other empire builders that the exiles
 naturally looked upon him as a veritable saviour in the hands
 of their god.

Israel will serve Yahweh. If Cyrus is a servant of
 Yahweh his own chosen people are much more his servants. They
 are the seed of Abraham, his friend.⁸⁴ They are his witnesses
 who know him and believe in him.⁸⁵ Jacob, the servant of
 Yahweh, should not fear, for Yahweh formed him before his
 birth.⁸⁶ Yahweh has raised up Cyrus for the sake of Jacob,
 his servant.⁸⁷ He is calling his servants from the ends of the
 earth⁸⁸ to pour out his spirit upon them.⁸⁹ Although they are

⁸⁰ Isaiah 45:13

⁸¹ Isaiah 41:25

⁸² Isaiah 45:5-6

⁸³ Cf. ante, pp. 75-6

⁸⁴ Isaiah 43:10

⁸⁵ Isaiah 44:1

⁸⁶ Isaiah 45:4

⁸⁷ Isaiah 41:9

⁸⁸ Isaiah 44:3

people who are blind and sinful⁹⁰ it has pleased Yahweh to use them for a testing of his righteousness.⁹¹ They need not fear, for he will protect them.

Yahweh will further be honored by the subject of four Servant Songs. The author may or may not have been Deutero-Isaiah.⁹² The identity of the suffering servant is also a puzzle. He may have been an individual, such as Josiah, Jeremiah, Jehoiachin, or Zerubbabel, some unnamed friend of the author who was afflicted with leprosy or suffered martyrdom, Deutero-Isaiah himself, the Messiah, the Tammuz-Adonis god of vegetation, the faithful remnant of Israel, or Israel as a whole.⁹³ One or the other of the last two suggestions is most often accepted.⁹⁴

Whatever the answer to these puzzles, the fact remains that the conception of a Suffering Servant has added much to religious understanding. He suffered for a cause. He must not complain. Out of that suffering will come redemption, not only for Israel, but for all the world. The light must be carried to the Gentiles until justice and righteousness

⁹⁰ Isaiah 42:18-25

⁹¹ Isaiah 43:1-6

⁹² W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 273-4.

⁹³ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction To the Old Testament, pp. 262-3.

⁹⁴ Owen C. Whitehouse, Isaiah (The New Century Bible), Volume II, pp. 18-29.

are established in the earth. Mercy, and not judgment, is the theme of these songs.. There is no suggestion that Israel should rule.

The first song⁹⁵ presents the servant as chosen by Yahweh and completely acceptable to him. Because the spirit of God is within him his quiet words will be effective in establishing justice throughout the Gentile world.

In the second song⁹⁶ the servant is disillusioned by the fruitlessness of his labors, but is assured that he has been called of Yahweh from the womb. Divine power is still with him as he fulfills his mission of the restoration of Israel and the spiritual illumination of the Gentiles to the ends of the earth.

In the third song⁹⁷ the servant is the personification of patience. He has been abused and put to shame, but is still confident that Yahweh will sustain him.

The last song,⁹⁸ longest of the four and the most familiar, has often been regarded as referring to Jesus in his meekness, suffering, and work of atonement. This can be true in the sense that Jesus fulfilled the highest and finest ideals of Old Testament religion, but to regard such a passage

95 Isaiah 42:1-4

97 Isaiah 50:4-9

96 Isaiah 49:1-6

98 Isaiah 52:13-53:12

as a prediction destroys its historical significance.

The Servant Songs deserve one of the highest places in all religious literature. They teach that suffering, under the guidance of the divine spirit, may accomplish much for the cause of righteousness. Knudson writes:

Through the suffering and final exaltation of the innocent Servant the divine justice and love were to be so exhibited that men would acknowledge their guilt and turn in penitence to God. In this conception we have the high-water mark of Old Testament spirituality. And there is nothing superior to it in the New Testament. The only difference is that what remained a pure ideal in the Old Testament became an actuality in the New.⁹⁹

All the earth shall worship Yahweh. Salvation is not for the Jews alone, but for every people. All men will come to know Yahweh. This is the final and one of the most distinctive teachings of Deutero-Isaiah. He was the first to present the doctrine of universalism.

Absolute monotheism implies that Yahweh rules the affairs of all peoples, as well as of the Jews.

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together; ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that carry the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Declare ye, and bring it forth; . . . there is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. . . unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Only in Jehovah, it is said of me, is righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, pp. 273-4.

¹⁰⁰ Isaiah 45:20-24.

Yahweh's control over Cyrus, the king of Persia, implies that those who had not known him might respond to divine leadership. In a passage which recognizes Cyrus as his anointed, Yahweh says:

I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God. I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me: I am Jehovah, and there is none else.¹⁰¹

The Justice of Yahweh shall be for a light of the peoples.¹⁰² Yahweh will gather others besides the outcasts of Israel and make the temple a house of prayer for them all.¹⁰³ The Suffering Servant will be "for a light to the Gentiles," that the salvation of Yahweh may be known "to the end of the earth."¹⁰⁴

3. Prophetic Teaching in Certain Psalms.

The Psalms were the sacred hymns of the Hebrews. They were collected from many sources over a long period of time. Many of them were used in worship, some in the first temple and more of them in the second one. They underwent repeated revisions and did not reach their final form until about 50 B. C.¹⁰⁵ The piety of the Old Testament, which is reflected

¹⁰¹ Isaiah 45:5-6

¹⁰² Isaiah 51:4

¹⁰³ Isaiah 56:7-8

¹⁰⁴ Isaiah 49:6

¹⁰⁵ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 187-8.

with great clearness in the Psalms, has been called "the speech of the soul face to face with God."¹⁰⁶

The Psalms portray a wide variety of moods and religious ideals. A few passages set forth the coming of the universal rule of God.

All the earth shall turn to Yahweh. Psalm 22:27-31.

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah;

And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is Jehovah's;

And he is the ruler over the nations.

All the fat ones of the earth shall eat and worship;

All they that go down to the dust shall bow before him,
Even he that cannot keep his soul alive.

A seed shall serve him;

It shall be told of the Lord unto the next generation.

They shall come and shall declare his righteousness

Unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done it.¹⁰⁷

The meaning of this passage is easily understood in the light of the teaching of Deutero-Isaiah. Yahweh is the supreme ruler of men and of nations; therefore all peoples shall eventually worship him. Those who are about to go down to the dust in death, as well as those in vigorous health, shall bow before him. Just as a few faithful in Israel have kept alive the worship of Yahweh, so a seed among the nations is destined to preserve and pass on the knowledge of Yahweh

¹⁰⁶ John Edgar McFadyen, An Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 238.

¹⁰⁷ Psalm 22:27-31.

to the generations to come. This passage looks to the future as well as to the ends of the earth. It is a late addition to the Psalms.¹⁰⁸

He has the confidence of all the nations. Psalm 65.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion;
 And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
 O thou that hearest prayer,
 Unto thee shall all flesh come.
 Iniquities prevail against me:
 As for our transgressions, thou wilt forgive them.
 Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest
 to approach unto thee,
 That he may dwell in thy courts:
 We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house,
 Thy holy temple.
 By terrible things you wilt answer us in righteousness,
 O God of our salvation,
 Thou art the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
 And of them that are afar off upon the sea:
 Who by his strength setteth fast the mountains,
 Being girded about with might;
 Who stilleth the roaring of the seas,
 The roaring of the waves,
 And the tumult of the peoples.
 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid
 of thy tokens:
 Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening
 to rejoice.¹⁰⁹

Psalm 65 is a temple hymn of praise used on the occasion of votive offerings.¹¹⁰ A strong spirit of universalism pervades the entire poem, although it is not made the only theme.

¹⁰⁸ Charles Augustus Briggs, The Book of Psalms, (I. C. C.), Volume I, p. 199.

¹⁰⁹ Psalm 65: 1-8

¹¹⁰ Charles Augustus Briggs, The Book of Psalms (I. C. C.), Volume II, p. 680.

Yahweh is worthy of praise. He hears the prayers of all humanity. Confidence in him is not limited to Zion, but is extended to the very ends of the earth and the sea. There is no limit to his forgiveness or his salvation. Should not this be true, since he is the master of creation?

The remaining five verses of the psalm speak of how he waters and enriches the earth, causing it to bring forth abundant harvests for the benefit of man and beast, and end with a note of joy. The implication is clear that just as he extends the richness of his physical blessings to all the earth, so to all peoples everywhere the blessings of salvation are offered.

He will readily forgive. Psalm 86. This psalm is for use in public synagogue worship. It breathes a spirit of humility and supplication such as an individual or a group might wish to express.

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive,
And abundant in lovingkindness unto all them that
call upon thee.¹¹¹

There is no limit to the goodness of Yahweh. More striking, still, are two verses which give clear expression to universalism and absolute monotheism.

¹¹¹ Psalm 65:5

All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship
before thee, O Lord;
And they shall glorify thy name.
For thou are great, and doest wondrous things:
Thou art God alone.¹¹²

The fact that the first half of this quotation is probably a late gloss in an ancient psalm¹¹³ only increases its interest for us. The reasonable implications of the worship of Yahweh, who is the only god, were growing in the minds of the people. Although the Hebrew nation as a whole never accepted the doctrine of universalism, such a psalm as this shows that its significance was not entirely overlooked.

Jerusalem is the universal city. Psalm 87. This poem, another late psalm,¹¹⁴ rises to the conception that Jerusalem shall be called the city of God to which people of the nations may come and take pride in their common inheritance. Yahweh delights in her. She is to be the center of the universal kingdom. Nowhere else in the psalms is such an idea found,¹¹⁵ although it may be noted in some of the prophetic writings.

¹¹² Psalm 86:1

¹¹³ Charles Augustus Briggs, The Book of Psalms (I. C. C.), Vol. II, p. 236.

¹¹⁴ T. Witton Davies, The Psalms (The Century Bible), Vol. II, p. 111.

¹¹⁵ A. F. Kirkpatrick, The Book of Psalms, (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges), Books II & III, p. 519.

The ancient enemy people of Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia are mentioned among those who shall take pride in their Jerusalem citizenship.¹¹⁶

The whole psalm breathes a spirit of gladness, for those who come to Jerusalem shall do so freely.

They that sing as well as they that dance shall say,
All my fountains are in thee.¹¹⁷

4. Zechariah 1-8. 520 B. C.

The prophet Zechariah, a man of priestly descent,¹¹⁸ was a young contemporary of Haggai. The two men faced the same conditions and spoke to the same people. They vigorously urged the rebuilding of the temple.¹¹⁹ Whereas Haggai was primarily an apocalyptist, Zechariah must be classed among the prophets. In his opening address¹²⁰ he made a direct appeal for repentance as "the former prophets" had done. As one who was able to declare "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts" he is conscious of being one of them. His interest in the rebuilding of the temple was moral and spiritual.

¹¹⁶ Psalm 87:4.

¹¹⁷ Psalm 87:7.

¹¹⁸ This conclusion is reached by a comparison of Ezra 5:1 and 6:14, which give the information that Zechariah was the direct son of Iddo, with Nehemiah 12:16, which lists Iddo as one of the priests.

¹¹⁹ Cf. ante. pp. 76-8. ¹²⁰ Zechariah 1:1-6.

The central section of Zechariah's work is made up of a series of eight visions. Were they dreams, ecstatic trances, the product of an unusually vivid imagination, or literary devices employed by an effective writer to impress certain truths upon his readers? Zechariah grappled with the great problems of his time---the presence of sin, Judah's hope for the future, the unfinished temple, hostile neighbors, and the leadership of God. Mitchell holds that in those days visions were common literary forms, and insists that Zechariah's use of them was both sane and practical.¹²¹ Driver leans toward the opinion that this prophet, a keen and practical man, deliberately chose allegories as the best means of conveying his thought to a nation of dreamers.¹²² He was a literary ancestor of John Bunyan.

The temple must be rebuilt. In vision one¹²³ the prophet sees four riders coming from the four corners of the earth on horses of as many colors. They report that "all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest."¹²⁴ An angel speaks "good words, even comfortable words,"¹²⁵ saying that Yahweh is displeased with

¹²¹ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 99.

¹²² S. R. Driver, The Minor Prophets (The Century Bible), p. 177.

¹²³ Zechariah 1:7-17 ¹²⁴ Zechariah 1:11 ¹²⁵ Zechariah 1:13

the nations, but very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion.

Therefore thus saith Jehovah: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith Jehovah of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity; and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.¹²⁶

Vision two¹²⁷ tells how four horns, symbolizing enemy nations, are broken by four smiths. This is the first instance where horns are used in the scriptures to represent world powers.¹²⁸ The meaning is clear that the nations, which scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, are now unable to hinder the work of reconstruction.

These first two visions picture world conditions being such that nothing need hinder the rebuilding of the temple.

Yahweh watches over Jerusalem. Vision three¹²⁹ tells how a man with a measuring reed takes down the dimensions of Jerusalem. An angel promises that the transformed city shall become a great and flourishing metropolis with Yahweh himself dwelling in the midst of it.

¹²⁶ Zechariah 1:16-17

¹²⁷ Zechariah 1:18-21

¹²⁸ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 131.

¹²⁹ Zechariah 2:1-5

There follows here a lyric¹³⁰ which looks forward to the return of the exiles in a spirit similar to that of Deutero-Isaiah. Smith thinks there was inserted here a song from twenty years earlier. Perhaps Zechariah wrote it at that time, or it could have been penned and inserted by someone else.¹³¹ The song expresses exultant joy and praise that Jerusalem, once more the home of Yahweh, shall also be the home of many peoples.

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah. And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.¹³²

Vision four¹³³ pictures Joshua the high priest clothed in filthy garments and standing before Yahweh in the heavenly court. Yahweh rebukes Satan, the adversary, and commands that the priest be dressed in rich apparel and a mitre placed upon his head. Yahweh promises that as Joshua walks in his ways he shall be given authority to govern. The power of the

¹³⁰ Zechariah 2:6-13

¹³¹ George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, pp. 255-6.

¹³² Zechariah 2:1-12

¹³³ Zechariah 3:1-10

priesthood in a restored Messianic kingdom is evidently referred to in "my servant the branch."¹³⁴

The watchfulness of Yahweh over Joshua and the priesthood is indicated by mention of a stone with seven eyes.¹³⁵ The figure is too strange to be taken literally, but the meaning is clear.

The implication of the vision is that Jerusalem will continue to be the center of worship, as tradition and the Deuteronomic Code had made it. Therefore it was to be the more sacred to Yahweh and his people.

Vision five¹³⁶ gives further assurance of Yahweh's watchfulness. A golden candlestick with seven lamps represents the word of Yahweh to the one who was expected to be the new king.

This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.¹³⁷

The candlestick is set beside two olive trees which represent Joshua, the priest, and Zerubbabel, the prince,

. . . the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 156.

¹³⁵ Zechariah 3:9

¹³⁶ Zechariah 4:1-14

¹³⁷ Zechariah 4:6

¹³⁸ Zechariah 4:14

Sin will be driven from Judah. Vision six¹³⁹ pictures a great flying roll, fifteen by thirty feet, which goes over all the land to carry a curse into the home of every person who is dishonest or swears falsely by the name of Yahweh. The word סֵפֶר, or "roll," is the ordinary Old Testament one for a parchment book of the common type. Spoken curses were thought to be effective in accomplishing their ends, but written ones were doubly so.¹⁴⁰

Lying and stealing seem always to be the most persistent sins. They absolutely can have no place in the new Judah. Although the nation will be spared, the person who dares to commit these wrongs will be cut off. There is here a double emphasis---on righteousness and on individualism---presented in a manner which no one could fail to understand.

Vision seven¹⁴¹ represents the wickedness of Israel by a woman who is firmly sealed up in an ephah and carried with wings to Babylon, where she must remain. An ephah, the largest measure used by the Jews, was round like a barrel and contained a little over seven gallons.

¹³⁹ Zechariah 5:1-4

¹⁴⁰ S. R. Driver, The Minor Prophets (The New Century Bible), Vol. II, p. 206.

¹⁴¹ Zechariah 5:5-11

This woman may represent the sins of Judah in a general sense¹⁴² or, more specifically, the evil of idolatry.¹⁴³ The Hebrew people had long struggled with idolatry, and it was troubling them even after the exile. It was particularly offensive to Yahweh, and the prophets had bitterly opposed it. If idolatry is meant here it is well represented by a woman. Idolatry and prostitution were associated together, and women played a very important part in the worship of the Babylonian divinities. In purifying the worship of Israel, as the new temple was being built, it was necessary that every pagan influence be eliminated.

Peace is assured in the earth. The eighth and final vision¹⁴⁴ tells of four chariots, the four winds of heaven, which go out from the presence of Yahweh through the whole earth. They are drawn by horses of matching colors, as Egyptian and Assyrian chariots were, but their quest seems to be one of peace.

The majesty of Yahweh is reflected in the symbolism which is used. The chariots emerge from between two

¹⁴² Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 174.

¹⁴³ S. R. Driver, Haggai and Zechariah (The New Century Bible), Vol. II, p. 208.

¹⁴⁴ Zechariah 6:1-8

mountains of brass. Oriental mythology often located the dwelling place of deity behind such mountains. It may be that the bronze pillars, Jachin and Boaz, at the entrance of Solomon's temple,¹⁴⁵ were reminiscent of this myth. On such pillars in front of Phoenician sanctuaries altar fires were placed. Babylonian seals show the sun rising between two mountains which are evidently regarded as the boundaries between heaven and earth. It seems clear, then, that in some way these chariots were meant to represent the spirit of Yahweh himself.¹⁴⁶

Upon their return the chariots report quiet in the north country. They bring assurance of relief from further oppression. There is peace in the earth.

Righteousness shall be established. From a short passage immediately following the visions¹⁴⁷ scholars have inferred that Zechariah confidently expected the Davidic line to come back into power in the person of Zerubbabel. As the wording now stands the prophet is directed to make crowns and set them upon the head of Joshua, the priest.

¹⁴⁵ I Kings 7:13-22

¹⁴⁶ W. Emery Barnes, Haggai and Zechariah (Cambridge Bible), page 51.

¹⁴⁷ Zechariah 6:9-15

Textual emendations show that Zerubbabel was to have been made king. After the Persian police quietly took this political aspirant away his name seems to have been eliminated from the scriptural record and Joshua's put in its place.¹⁴⁸ This was done to obscure the mistake of those who had supported Zerubbabel.

Back of the substitution of the name Joshua for Zerubbabel is the possibility that when the latter had been set up as temporal king in Jerusalem he was disciplined by Darius while on his way to Egypt in 517 B. C. or on his return.¹⁴⁹ Darius could not tolerate any political rival, even in such a small province as Palestine. That he held no enmity against the Jews as a people is shown by the fact that he allowed worship in the new temple to continue and passed no decree limiting their religious activities.

There may have been sufficient rivalry between the political and priestly parties in Jerusalem so that the latter was not particularly dismayed by the turn of events.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 605-6.

¹⁴⁹ Aage Bentzen, "Quelques remarques sur le mouvement messianique parmi les juives aus environs de l'an 520 avant Jesus-Christ," Revue d'Histoire de Philosophie religieuses, p. 495.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 499-500.

If Zerubbabel had any choice in the matter he decided against rebellion. The result, for the people, was a period of religious pacifism.

It may be argued that Zechariah was an apocalypticist.¹⁵¹ In support of this view it has been said that he was displeased with the nations,¹⁵² jealous for Israel,¹⁵³ and hopeful that political power would center in Jerusalem. Although Zechariah lived in a time when apocalyptic hopes were growing rapidly, he was not greatly influenced by dreams of a triumphant Israel. His main emphases were upon the worship of Yahweh, the righteousness of the individual, the establishment of peace, and universal blessedness. The closing oracles of Zechariah,¹⁵⁴ which were written after the disappearance of Zerubbabel, contain some of his finest teachings.

¹⁵¹ R. H. Charles, Hebrew, Jewish and Christian Eschatology, pp. 120-1.

¹⁵² Zechariah 1:5

¹⁵³ Zechariah 2:8

¹⁵⁴ Zechariah 7-8

Zechariah made clear what righteousness meant, even though, like Isaiah, he knew that the people were deaf and stubborn.¹⁵⁵

Execute true judgment, and show kindness and compassion every man to his brother; and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the sojourner, nor the poor; and let none of you devise evil against his brother in your heart. . . . These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates. . . and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith Jehovah.¹⁵⁶

Zechariah gives one of the finest pictures in the scriptures of what a peaceful and contented community should be like.¹⁵⁷ Jerusalem, the city of truth, will be filled with happy children, who play in the streets, and comfortable elderly men and women who watch them with delight. All shall enjoy food and security, for Yahweh will make Israel a blessing.

The ideal king is hardly a militarist.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass.¹⁵⁸

He shall speak peace to the nations, and there will be no more war.

¹⁵⁵ Zechariah 7:11-12

¹⁵⁷ Zechariah 8:1-13

¹⁵⁶ Zechariah 7:9-10: 8:16-17

¹⁵⁸ Zechariah 9:9

Zechariah was a disciple of Jeremiah and Deutero-Isaiah in looking for the redemption of the nations.

Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you for we have heard that God is with you.¹⁵⁹

5. Malachi. 516-444 B. C.

The book of Malachi is anonymous. Its Hebrew name, ^{מַלְאֲכִי}, means simply "my messenger." Of the author it can only be said that he was a patriotic Jew who loved Jerusalem and her inhabitants, held to the faith that Yahweh would still redeem Israel, plead for a return to the ancient standards of religion, and endeavored to inspire faith in the hearts of a listless people.

The date of writing is usually placed some time in the Persian period between the completion of the temple in 516 B. C. and the coming of Nehemiah in 444 B. C.¹⁶⁰ Pfeiffer¹⁶¹ and

¹⁵⁹ Zechariah 8:20-23

¹⁶⁰ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 429-30.

¹⁶¹ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 614.

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Gray¹⁶² confidently place the date about 460 B. C. Welch favors a date after Nehemiah and before Ezra.¹⁶³ These scholars note that the reforms of Ezra, and particularly the influence of the Priestly Code, had not yet been felt. Some, however, do not venture to say whether Malachi came before, during, or after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.¹⁶⁴

Although the stature of Malachi is small beside the eighth and seventh century prophets, he has much in common with them. He thoroughly condemns the people for their sins, and sees no need of preaching consolation. He tried to face the many social and religious evils of his day.¹⁶⁵

Worship must be conducted properly. The book of Malachi betrays much spiritual indifference of the part of the people in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and goes on to express the great concern of one who believed that the public welfare demanded wholehearted support of the temple. Unlike some of the earlier prophets, the author held that sacrifices were necessary. He was greatly distressed because sick and

¹⁶² George Buchanan Gray, A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 231.

¹⁶³ Adam C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, pp. 113-25.

¹⁶⁴ J. M. P. Smith, Malachi (I. C. C.), p. 8.

¹⁶⁵ S. R. Driver, The Minor Prophets, (The New Century Bible), pp. 287-91.

blemished animals were being brought to the altar.¹⁶⁶ In this he saw the dishonor of Yahweh.¹⁶⁷ The whole situation was contemptible. The people took no interest in the appointed feasts,¹⁶⁸ and they were calling the sacred observances "a weariness."¹⁶⁹ A curse from Yahweh would await the man who brought anything but the best to the altar.¹⁷⁰

Priests, as well as people, must improve their ways. Levi, who feared God, had turned many away from evil because peace and uprightness were in him.¹⁷¹ Now the members of the priesthood were even causing Judah to stumble and go astray. They deserved to be accursed and their children made ashamed.¹⁷² Their office had become contemptible and base.¹⁷³ These men should be upright in their living, conscientious in the performance of their duties, and altogether worthy as spiritual leaders. According to Malachi, the priests should warn and instruct, as the prophets of an earlier day had done.

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.¹⁷⁴

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|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 166 Malachi 1:8 | 167 Malachi 1:6 | 168 Malachi 1:12 |
| 169 Malachi 1:13 | 170 Malachi 1:14 | 171 Malachi 2:5-6 |
| 172 Malachi 2:2 | 173 Malachi 2:8-9 | 174 Malachi 2:7 |

selected animals were being brought to the market, 155 in this
 he was the first one to be taken, 156 The whole situation was
 different, 157 The people took no interest in the appointed
 horses, 158 and they were calling the sacred observances "a
 waste of time, 159 a waste from which would result the man who
 brought everything but the best to the altar, 160

horses, as well as people, must improve their ways,
 161 who learned to, had to be very strong and vigorous
 horse and rider, 162 Now the horses of the
 aristocrats were now passing to the people and to the
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They deserved to be honored and their children made
 164 Their office had become contemptible and base, 165 These men
 should be put to death, 166 and their children in the
 possession of their horses, and elsewhere every man
 167 According to the law, the priests should wear and
 168 as the priests of an earlier day had done.

169 The priests' life should keep knowledge, and they
 should teach the law to the people; for he is the messenger
 of Jehovah of hosts, 170

155	156	157	158	159	160
161	162	163	164	165	166
167	168	169	170	171	172

The Gentiles will honor Yahweh. In earlier prophetic writings universalism had been based upon the idea that since Yahweh is the only god and exercises supreme control over nature and human affairs, all nations will ultimately be drawn to him. Without reference to monotheism or the power of Yahweh Malachi makes a plain declaration:

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith Jehovah of hosts. . . for I am a great King, saith Jehovah of hosts, and my name is terrible among the Gentiles.¹⁷⁵

The reasoning seems to be that if the Children of Israel fail to appreciate and worship their god as they should, even the foreigners will magnify his name. The people must be shaken out of their complacency. Although this is an unusual argument, Pfeiffer cites it as "an instance of religious liberalism unparalleled in the Old Testament."¹⁷⁶

Righteousness must be practiced. Malachi believed thoroughly in temple ritual, but his insistence upon righteousness made him a prophet rather than a ceremonialist. He lashed out vigorously against those who dealt treacherously with their brethren.¹⁷⁷ In the same breath he gave a hint that

¹⁷⁵ Malachi 1:11, 14b

¹⁷⁶ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 613.

¹⁷⁷ Malachi 2:10

The question will be asked, in what sense
 will the universalist have been based upon the idea that alone
 given in the only way for the universalist to control over
 nature and human affairs, all nations will ultimately be
 drawn to him, without reference to the position of the power
 of the universalist under a given condition:

For the sake of the sake of the man over who the going
 down of the sun shall be great among the
 nations; and in every place where shall be offered
 unto him, and a name offering; for my name shall
 be great among the nations, which shall be known of
 for I am a great God, which shall be known of
 for I am a great God, which shall be known of
 for I am a great God, which shall be known of

The reasoning seems to be that if the children of
 Israel fall to appreciate and worship their God as they should,
 even the foreigners will worship his name. The people must
 be drawn out of their paganism. Although this is an
 unusual argument, it is also cited as an instance of
 religious liberalism superimposed in the old testament, and
 it is not to be overlooked. Indeed, it is
 thoroughly in the spirit of the old testament, and the inference upon
 righteousness made him a prophet rather than a cosmologist.
 He is not only a prophet, but also a cosmologist, and he is
 also a prophet, and he is also a cosmologist, and he is also a prophet,
 and he is also a cosmologist, and he is also a prophet, and he is also a cosmologist,

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righteous living was a part of the old covenant with Yahweh which was assumed by the fathers. Religion, as Amos had said, means righteousness.

A second test of religion was marital stability. Too many men were divorcing their wives.¹⁷⁸ Such conduct Yahweh hates, for a wife is a companion who is joined to her husband by a sacred agreement. This teaching seems to indicate that Malachi was written before the time of Ezra, who urged that foreign wives be put away.

Tithes must be paid. There were two ancient ideas of the tithe. It fulfilled an obligation to a deity who made the harvests possible and must be placated if other harvests were to follow.¹⁷⁹ It expressed gratitude to God.¹⁸⁰ Malachi was sufficiently old fashioned to stress the former view.

Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts. . . Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. . . In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house, saith Jehovah of hosts.¹⁸¹

The last part of the above quotation shows that the author was thinking about temple maintenance.

Blessings will come from Yahweh. When the tithes are paid the people will witness how Yahweh fulfills his part of

¹⁷⁸ Malachi 2:14-16

¹⁷⁹ Leviticus 27:30-33

¹⁸⁰ Genesis 28:20-22

¹⁸¹ Malachi 3:7b-10a

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the covenant by sending abundant harvests and preventing any destruction. Judah will be a delightful and happy land.¹⁸²

Yahweh will punish the wicked, but remember those who serve him. The prophet used extravagant figures of speech to convey his meaning.

But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings; and ye shall go forth and gambol as calves of the stall.¹⁸³

The final appeal of the prophet was to free will.¹⁸⁴ The people must keep the law of Moses, observe the statutes, and welcome the spirit of Elijah. Another conclusion might have made him an apocalyptist, since he already anticipated the great and terrible day of Yahweh.

6. Isaiah 19

The date of this chapter is uncertain. It may have been written in 720 B. C., when Sargon defeated the Egyptians at Raphia,¹⁸⁵ in the early part of the exile, when many Jews were fleeing to Egypt,¹⁸⁶ or near 160 B. C. in the early days of the Maccabaeen struggle, when a Jewish temple was being

¹⁸² Malachi 3:10b-12 ¹⁸³ Malachi 4:2 ¹⁸⁴ Malachi 4:4-6

¹⁸⁵ S. R. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 215.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. ante, pp. 71-3.

erected at Leontopolis.¹⁸⁷ At any rate, the presence of a Jewish colony in Egypt stimulated a generous spirit of evangelism.

Yahweh will discipline the Egyptians. The first eighteen verses of the chapter describe the internal warfare, oppression, drought, poor leadership, weakness, and terror which shall oppress the Egyptians until they learn to fear Yahweh. The passage seems not to have been written in a spirit of vengeance. Between the lines there is the conception that just as Israel and Judah were obliged to learn by bitter experience, so must Egypt learn. The universal power of God, as presented in this chapter, suggests a late date.

The Egyptians will turn to Yahweh. The latter half of the chapter contains four paragraphs, each one of which submits a proposition looking forward to the salvation of Egypt. This is the more remarkable since that land was the scene of Israel's original bondage.

In Egypt there will be five cities which are loyal to Yahweh and wherein the language of Canaan is spoken.¹⁸⁸ Most of the Egyptian Jews were then learning to speak Greek.

¹⁸⁷ Henry Preserved Smith, Old Testament History pp. 446-7.

¹⁸⁸ Isaiah 19:18

erected at Leontopolis. At any rate, the presence of a
Jewish colony in Egypt attested a knowledge of the
eventual.

Yahweh will establish the Kingdom. The first
of these verses in the chapter describe the internal warfare,
oppression, drought, poor leadership, weakness, and terror,
which shall oppress the Egyptians until they learn to fear
Yahweh. The passage need not to have been written in a
spirit of vengeance. Between the lines there is the
conception that just as Israel and Judah were obliged to
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Egypt. This is the more remarkable since that land was the
scene of Israel's original bondage.
In Egypt there will be five cities which are loyal to
Yahweh and wherein the language of Gerson is spoken. The
of the Egyptian Jews were then learning to speak Greek.

One of these cities is to be called עִיר הַהָרָס . The older translations give the rendering "city of destruction," which seems out of harmony with the chapter. Recent versions read "city of the sun,"¹⁸⁹ which is literal and more logical.

Yahweh will be worshipped in the land of Egypt.¹⁹⁰ An altar and a pillar will bear witness to him there. In their extremity the Egyptians will cry to Yahweh, who will send them a saviour, defend them, and deliver them. They will worship with sacrifices and oblations. Yahweh will both smite and heal.

Egypt and Assyria will be joined by a highway in order that the peoples of these two nations, which had oppressed Israel, might worship Yahweh together.¹⁹¹

Finally, the people of Israel, Egypt, and Assyria will share equally in the favor of Yahweh. Each will be accounted "a third" of his blessing to the earth.

. .for Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ James Moffatt, The Old Testament, A New Translation and J. M. Powis Smith, The Bible, An American Translation.

¹⁹⁰ Isaiah 19:19-22

¹⁹¹ Isaiah 19:23

¹⁹² Isaiah 19:24-5

¹⁹³ Isaiah 19:25

Whatever unnamed prophet wrote these verses he was doubtless an enthusiast who had caught a vision of world evangelism and regarded the Jewish center in Egypt as a means of extending the worship of Yahweh.¹⁹⁴

7. Jonah, The Missionary Book

The story of Jonah is set in the golden age of Jeroboam II, when Assyria was beginning to overshadow her Syrian rival and Amos was hurling his denunciations against Israel.¹⁹⁵ Vocabulary, literary allusions, and the general argument of the book, however, indicate that it was written about 350 B. C. as a protest against the narrow nationalism of that time¹⁹⁶ or against Jewish religious pride which followed the canonization of the Mosaic Law.¹⁹⁷

The book has often been misunderstood and made the subject either of doubts or of mockery; but rightly viewed it shines like a gem. Of it one authority writes:

The book of Jonah is, in some ways, the greatest in the Old Testament; there is no other which so bravely claims the whole world for the love of God, or presents

¹⁹⁴ George Buchanan Gray, The Book of Isaiah (I. C. C.), Vol. I, p. 339.

¹⁹⁵ Compare Jonah 1:1 and II Kings 14:25.

¹⁹⁶ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 372-4.

¹⁹⁷ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 588.

its noble lessons with so winning or subtle an art.¹⁹⁸

These lessons become more readily apparent when the story is regarded not as literal history, but as a prophetic parable.

There is no escape from Yahweh. Theological arguments for monotheism are kept in the background, but the conception is amply expressed. The power of Yahweh reaches beyond the soil of Palestine to govern the Mediterranean storms.¹⁹⁹ He created the sea and the dry land.²⁰⁰ The heathen sailors fear him.²⁰¹ His power reaches into the deeps, where he forms a great fish to do his will.²⁰² He controls the life of nature through such ordinary means as a growing vine, a tiny worm, a sultry wind, and a blistering sun.²⁰³ From such a god Jonah found that he could not escape. Whether asleep in the hold of a ship which sailed from a foreign port, or even swallowed by a mighty fish, he was still within the realm of the Almighty. In the end he was obliged to do as Yahweh had first commanded him. He went to Nineveh to preach.

¹⁹⁸ John Edgar McFadyen, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 196

¹⁹⁹ Jonah 1:4-6

²⁰⁰ Jonah 1:9

²⁰¹ Jonah 1:10

²⁰² Jonah 1:17

²⁰³ Jonah 4:6-8

He is approached through prayer and repentance. There is no mention of temple worship, sacrifice, or priest. This is remarkable in an age when formal worship was greatly stressed. Relationship with Yahweh is direct. He speaks to Jonah. Jonah prays. The sailors pray. The people of Nineveh pray. Yahweh hears.

Yahweh is persuaded to carry out the clear command of God. Most important of all, the inhabitants of Nineveh, including king, people, and beasts, are led to repent in sackcloth and ashes of their evil ways.²⁰⁴ They believe in God. When they fast and cry mightily to him he spares them.

Israel has a message for the world. Jonah is commanded to cry against the wickedness of Nineveh, the greatest city of his day. Others were demanding the annihilation, rather than the conversion, of heathen nations.²⁰⁵ Jonah, at first, shares the popular view and explains his rebellion by saying:

I hastened to flee unto Tarshish; for I know that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and repentest thee of evil.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Jonah 3:5-11

²⁰⁵ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 334-5.

²⁰⁶ Jonah 4:2

Jonah is finally brought into line and demonstrates the value of universalism. His preaching brings about remarkable results.

Yahweh loves his entire creation. The most striking teaching of the book is reserved for the closing verses. Jonah is bemoaning the death of the gourd vine which he thought would provide shade for him while he watched the destruction of Nineveh. Yahweh speaks.

. .should not I have regard for Nineveh, that great city wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?²⁰⁷

With artistic restraint these words leave to the reader the obvious conclusion that if Yahweh calls the most wicked of cities to repentance he has a message of love for the whole world.

What Deutero-Isaiah had taught Jonah put into practice. He became the first foreign missionary.

²⁰⁷ Jonah 4:11

CHAPTER III

THE BACKGROUND OF APOCALYPTIC

Eschatology and apocalypse are words which must be carefully defined. They are closely related in meaning, but are by no means synonymous.

The primary root of eschatology is the Greek word *ἔσχατος*, which means "the last." In the Septuagint it is commonly used as a translation of *אֲחֵרִית* and *אֲחֵרִית* in the corresponding Hebrew text. The secondary root is *λόγος*, which means "speech, word, reason, or knowledge," as *דָּבָר*. According to Webster, eschatology is:

. .the doctrine of the last or final things, as death, judgment, and the events connected therewith.

The content of eschatology has been described quite concisely as follows:

Unter "Eschatologie" verstehen wir, was man jederzeit in der Dogmatik und theologischen Literatur darunter verstanden hat, die Lehre von den letzten Dingen, de novissimis, oder weniger theologisch ausgedrückt: die Vorstellung von jenem grossen Drama der Endzeit, mit dem nach jüdischem und christlichem Glauben diese Weltzeit endet und eine neue ewige Zeit des Heils anbricht. Die wesentlichen Momente in diesem Zukunfts-drama, wie wir es in den Prophetenbüchern des A. T. in immer neuen Dichtungen geschildert, angedeutet oder vorausgesetzt finden, sind: das grosse Gericht am Tage Jahwes über die Feinde Gottes, d. h. die Heiden und die Abtrünnigen in Israel, die Rettung eines "Restes" der Geretteten auf dem Gottesberge Zion, der Einzug Jahwes in seinen Tempel zur Besteigung seines Thrones und der Beginn seiner

THE HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT

The history of the subject is not very long, but it is very interesting. It is a subject which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished minds of the age.

The subject is one of the most important of the age. It is a subject which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished minds of the age.

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Königsherrschaft über die Welt, des Reiches Gottes, als Zeit der Segens und Friedens, der Erneuerung der Schöpfung und Neustiftung des Bundes zwischen Gott und den Seinen, Das ist die grosse Schicksalswende.¹

Apocalypse comes from the Greek word ἀποκαλύπτειν which, closely parallel to the Hebrew פָּלַג , means "to uncover or reveal." It has been called a dualistic mythology of the end---dualistic because of the assumption that in the midst of an evil world only the one all powerful God is good, and a mythology because it is a pictorial and narrative representation of the realities which must finally be established.²

Apocalypse is further defined as a kind of science which promises to conquer through unusual and secret means rather than through the long road of human endeavor.³ When the times are right, it is said, God will perform what man cannot possibly do. Apocalyptists seek to reveal that which is beyond the perception of the ordinary senses. Their revelations are in many ways fantastic, often having little ethical significance. They are concerned with ecstasies, allegories, numbers, symbolism, and artificial presentation

¹ Gustav Hölscher, Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 3.

² R. B. Y. Scott, The Relevance of the Prophets, pp. 5-6.

³ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, pp. 232-3.

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of history. They express preference for cult and magic, and recognize the power of both angels and demons. They anticipate a state of final blessedness in this present world and in the world to come.

Whereas eschatology is the doctrine of the last things, apocalypse is the revelation of the last things. The word "apocalyptic" may be either an adjective or a noun. In the latter usage it is a synonym for apocalyptic literature. Many conceptions are exchatological which cannot be regarded as apocalyptic, for eschatology is the wider term. An apocalypse, in the strictest sense, is a book, like Daniel or Revelation, which is primarily concerned with revealing the final human destiny.

1. The Beginnings of Apocalyptic Thought

The roots of Hebrew eschatology. The German theologians have been intensely interested in the study of eschatology and apocalyptic.⁴ This is only natural in view of the problems which have confronted their nation, particularly since the first World War. It remains as true in modern times as in biblical days that confidence in divine intervention offers a way out of any impossible situation.

⁴ For the survey of German studies which follows the writer is largely indebted to Gustav Hölscher, Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Eschatologie, pp. 1-18.

Gunkel, about 1900, came forward with the idea that Hebrew eschatology was based largely upon Babylonian astronomy and mythology. The astrologers were impressed with recurring cycles of darkness and dawn, as well as with the manner in which the stars seemed to move about the earth once in a year. Beginning and end, they thought, were closely bound up together. The god of creation, who in the beginning had slain the great evil dragon to bring the heavens and the earth into being, would again demonstrate his power by transforming his handiwork into perfection. These doctrines, says Gunkel, had filtered into Palestine by 2000 B. C.

Eduard Meyer, Kugler, and others exploded this theory by demonstrating that the first accurate astronomical measurements, particularly those having to do with the sun in relation to the stars, were not ancient Babylonian, but late Chaldean. Hölischer goes on to support the conclusion that Hebrew eschatology sprang primarily from religious conceptions. He says:

Eschatologie ist nicht Periodendruckung, ewige Wiederkehr, Krieslauf, sondern Erwartung eines engültigen Heiles. Der Ursprung der Eschatologie ist auch nicht zu begreifen aus blossen Naturmythologie, sondern vor allem aus spezifisch religiösen Motiven.⁵

Gressmann made further contributions to the study of

⁵ Gustav Hölischer, Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 6.

this general subject by the publication in 1905 of his Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie. Accepting the principle that the ultimate hopes of Israel were based upon a living religion rather than upon any foreign cosmology, he distinguished between natural and religious eschatology. The first, he said, influenced by primitive conceptions of the physical universe, anticipated a final catastrophe in nature. Earthquake, thunder and lightning, volcanic eruptions, fire, war, and pestilence were to be expected. The second, built upon the religious and moral genius of the Hebrew people, assured a return of the golden age, but more than that, the complete rule of righteousness in the earth. There were, according to Gressmann, three stages of development merged into one: a universal nature-mythology stage, a national Israelite stage, and a prophetic stage.

In regard to the fundamental and almost central place which Gressmann gives to the final world catastrophe, Sellin maintains that the religious conceptions were of primary importance, and the others only incidental. He points out that there is mention of a new or renewed heaven and earth, but not of another one. The old creation is not to be destroyed. God will finally rule the world, bringing both salvation and judgment. The Hebrews were not indebted to the Babylonians or to anyone else for their eschatology, he

says, since it sprang out of the combination of their own faith and experience.

Sigmund Mowinckel brings together the work of several German scholars and makes significant contributions of his own in a careful study of the Hebrew cult. He sees in those Psalms which speak of Yahweh as King⁶ an indication of genuine eschatology. He believes that they were first used in a harvest festival in honor of Yahweh, and then later adapted to three festivals---New Year, Atonement, and Booths. They speak of war and victory, the establishment of Yahweh on his throne, the renewal of the covenant with Israel, and the recreation of nature. The cult, he believes, became a creative drama. In this respect he sees a closer relationship between the Hebrew festivals and the development of eschatology than any of his predecessors had done. Although his position has been severely criticized from the standpoint that no well developed eschatology could have been present in the celebration of the early festivals, it has added emphasis to the belief that the source of Hebrew religious aspiration sprang primarily from within the people themselves.

Here may be noted the theory of Eduard Meyer that Hebrew ideology was largely indebted to the Egyptian worship

⁶ There are some twenty of these references.

of a nature god who died and came to life again each year according to the changes of the seasons. He says that the Hebrews adopted these traditions of their southern neighbors just as they had acquired the Joseph stories and just as the Mohammedans later appropriated much Hebrew and Christian material.

There appear, however, many differences between the Egyptians and the Hebrews. The former possessed a land that was free, and in which an established Pharaoh ruled. They lacked the intense religious motives which stirred the Hebrews. Finally, their nature worship did not include those elements which were so characteristic of Hebrew eschatology, namely, the Day of the Lord, his appearances, his establishment on a throne, his kingdom, the new creation, and the new covenant. For these reasons Hölscher concludes,

es scheint mir deshalb ganz unmöglich zu sein, die biblische Eschatologie aus Ägypten herzuleiten.⁷

In this he seems correct.

There is a strong possibility that Hebrew eschatology was much indebted to Persian Zarathustranism. The Persians did possess an eschatology, and their influence was felt to some extent through the Near East as early as the fifth or

⁷ Gustav Hölscher, Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 11.

sixth century B. C. The outstanding features of the Persian faith included dualism, world epochs, a final judgment, and the destruction of the world by fire.⁸ These conceptions undoubtedly shaped the late development of Jewish eschatology to some extent, but could have had no part in its beginning.

It may be noted, with some of the German theologians, that the cult was far from being the dominant feature of Hebrew religion. The festivals were the outgrowth, rather than the inspiration, of their faith. As the fortunes of the nation decreased, following the division of the kingdom, and as many a year was less prosperous than the one which preceded it, the festivals unavoidably came to be of decreasing significance.

Moreover, the Levites, the Rechabites, and the prophets struggled continually against the infusion of foreign modes of worship and against any overstress on ritual. They were the persistent enemies of the Canaanite Baals. There was a sturdy and vigorous quality among the Hebrews which was born of suffering, struggle, and aspiration. Their faith was a result of that which they found within themselves. That which they could not realize in the present they looked for in the future. So, out of their hunger for

⁸ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, pp. 344-51.

for salvation and out of their thirst for life, their faith in eschatology was born.

The problem arises as to just when a true eschatology came into being. Mowinckel believes that it developed in the period between Solomon and Amos. Holscher insists that it did not develop to any marked degree until the exile, and that Deutero-Isaiah gave the movement a strong impetus. This study had already endeavored to show that Deutero-Isaiah was primarily a prophet, rather than an apocalyptist, and will proceed on the assumption that discernible roots of eschatological belief extend far back into early Hebrew history.

Popular stories of deliverance. Long before any of the biblical material was written down the stories which both old and young loved to hear were told over and over again in oral form. Judging from the space which was later given to them the most popular must have been those dealing with the manner in which Yahweh watched over and delivered his people. Many nationals have had their folklore and hero stories. Those of the Hebrews were distinctive in that they featured the greatness of their god. For the most part, the least creditable were forgotten, but not always.⁹

⁹ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 150-1.

for satisfaction and out of their lives, their faith

in astrology was gone.

The problem arises as to just when a true condition

came into being. Historical evidence that it happened in the

period between 1600 and 1700. However, it is also

not developed to any extent until the 18th and 19th

centuries. There is no record of a serious epidemic.

There is already evidence to show that before 1600 was

probably a period, rather than an epidemic, and still

proceeds on the basis that the epidemic was of

epidemiological belief rather than the fact that it was

history.

There is evidence of a different kind before any of

the original evidence was written down the evidence which

old and young found to be very old, and even again in

other forms. Nothing from the space which was later given to

them the most popular must have been those dealing with the

manners in which things were done and believed in the world.

It is not possible to have had their faith and their stories.

Some of the stories were distinctive in that they were

the products of their own. For the most part, the great

stories were legends, but not always.

Robert M. Kellie, Introduction to the life
of the people, p. 100-1.

This material is thought to have been developed in various ways before the time that it was written down.¹⁰ The material for the so-called J document was collected in the southern kingdom by 850 B. C., and that for the E document in the northern kingdom a hundred years later. There are discernible subdivisions in each, in addition to lay sources, known as L, and stories of the extreme south, known as S. Two hundred years later the priestly writers began gathering and editing more of the oral materials in a form now known as P. They also made use of D and H, which were legal documents.

From the first, the Hebrews were moving toward the conception that their god was one. The Book of Genesis opens with these sublime words: "In the beginning God" He created all things, and continued to rule them. He manifested his power in the phenomena of nature. Most important of all, he directed the fortunes of those who knew him.

He walked with Adam in the Garden, and talked directly with others. He appeared in dreams, and often sent his messengers to warn or guide. When occasion demanded he was ready to help with his limitless power.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 139-41.

The most remarkable of the early stories is that of Noah and the Flood.¹¹ Without doubt, it was borrowed from early Babylonian sources,¹² but the fact that the Hebrews adapted it to their own needs shows their great interest in its significance.

There was so much evil in the world¹³ that God determined to destroy mankind.¹⁴ But Noah was just.¹⁵ Therefore God warned him of the wrath to come and instructed him how he might build an ark in order to save his household. When all was ready the universe itself responded to the will of God.

. .the selfsame day were all the fountains of the deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.¹⁶

Imbedded in this ancient story are fundamental conceptions of eschatological belief. God is supreme. He will destroy the evil and preserve the righteous. The resources of the universe are at his command. Only a few will be saved.

It would be interesting and profitable to follow

¹¹ Genesis 6-8.

¹² George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible, pp. 299-303.

¹³ Genesis 6:5

¹⁴ Genesis 6:6-7

¹⁵ Genesis 6:8-9

¹⁶ Genesis 7:11b-12

the evidences of divine guardianship through the lives of the patriarchs, but they can be touched on here only in the briefest fashion. Abraham was chosen of God, led into a new land which was to be an inheritance for his seed, and preserved from many dangers.

Lot was remarkably preserved from death in the destruction of Sodom. This story, although localized to a small area, is parallel in its fundamental conceptions to that of the flood. Fire from heaven takes the place of raging waters.

Isaac was saved from death on the sacrificial altar to preserve seed for his aged father. Jacob, although not always straightforward, enjoyed divine assistance throughout an adventurous life, and became the father of many sons, giving hope to the promise that the Children of Israel should become a mighty nation. The stories of Joseph were particular favorites. God was with him; he remained faithful; and God made him to prosper. Was it not easily to be inferred that divine favor would be extended to other faithful individuals and to the nation?

The most significant of all the ancient stories are those having to do with Moses and deliverance from Egypt. God would not allow his people to suffer beyond endurance. Egypt, the enemy, was mercilessly lashed with plagues which

The evidence of divine guardianship through the lives of the patriarchs, but they can be looked on as only in the earliest fashion. Abraham was chosen of God, led into a new land which was to be an inheritance for his seed, and preserved from any danger.

Isaac was constantly preserved from death in the destruction of Sodom. This story, although localized to a small area, is typical in its fundamental conception of that of the flood. The Lord never takes the place of being a deity.

Isaac was saved from death on the sacrificial altar to preserve seed for his aged father. Jacob, although not always a spiritualist, enjoyed divine assistance throughout an eventful life, and became the father of many sons. Living hope to the promise that the Children of Israel should possess a city of refuge. The stories of Joseph were particularly favorites. God was with him; he remained faithful; and God made him to prosper. Was it not easily to be inferred that divine favor would be extended to other faithful individuals and to the nation?

The most significant of all the ancient stories are those having to do with Moses and deliverance from Egypt. God would not allow his people to suffer beyond measure. The story, the story, was religiously fused with legends which

only he could inflict. He sent the destroying angel of death. The Red Sea crossing was a tremendous demonstration to the Children of Israel, one which they were never allowed to forget, that God would use his miraculous power to save them.¹⁷

In the wilderness he preserved his people by sending manna from heaven, water from the rock, and quails borne on the wind. In the conquest of Canaan he led them successfully in battle. The waters of the Jordan paused to allow an easy crossing, and the walls of Jerico came tumbling down at the sound of blaring trumpets.¹⁸

The judges benefitted by the leadership of Yahweh. Deborah joined her strength with that of the stars in fighting against Sisera. Gideon conquered the Midianites because Yahweh told him what to do and put fear in the enemy camp. Samson triumphed over the Philistines only when the power of his god was in him.

¹⁷ A careful study of the documents reveals that the story was developed considerably between the days of J and P. The difference between a strong east wind blowing back the sea and a wall of water being made to ride on either side of the fleeing Israelites goes to show how much more the people were learning to trust in a supernatural display of Yahweh's power.

¹⁸ The impression of a quick conquest as given in the Book of Joshua, when compared with the earlier narratives in Judges, further illustrates the principle that the conception of miraculous divine leadership was subject to development. See Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 95-6.

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of numerous divine leadership was subject to development.
See James L. Tait, The Testament of the Lord, pp. 25-30.

The stories of Elijah's triumph over the threat of Baal worship and the wicked Jezebel also have considerable bearing on the development of eschatology. Who can read the account of how fire came down from heaven to consume his water soaked sacrifice on Mt. Carmel, or of how Yahweh withheld the rain and finally broke the drought, without sensing the dramatic power of Yahweh's complete authority?

One more delightful story which deserves mention is the adventure of David, the shepherd lad, with the Philistine giant, Goliath.¹⁹ He was only a boy with a sling in his hand, but his god was with him. He slew the giant. The same divine favor followed him, in spite of a great sin, all through his life.

These and other similar stories, told over and over again in desert tents or under the stars, at festival seasons or at ordinary family gatherings, must have exerted a tremendous influence in shaping the thinking of the Hebrews. Young and old alike were ready to believe that their god would use his limitless power in their behalf and destroy their enemies. Such faith became a fundamental psychological and religious element in the life of the Hebrew people.

¹⁹ Scholars believe that this, too, was subject to enlargement.

Ancient songs. Just as the ancient Hebrews were a nation of story tellers, so they were a nation of singers. They loved the rhythmic beat of stressed and unstressed syllables. Their poetry, characterized by balance of thought, rather than by rime, possessed a vigorous, rugged quality which was well suited to the portrayal of heroic action. As in other primitive cultures, it is thought that minstrels preserved the memory of notable events in poetic form even before the prose narratives became fixed.²⁰

One of the most remarkable of the early Hebrew poems is the Song of Deborah.²¹ Scholars generally regard it as an authentic historical record.

Soon after the Children of Israel had entered the land of Canaan, when there was no king over them and every man did what was right in his own eyes,²² there arose judges who led the people in times of emergency. These were not lawgivers, but military leaders. One of the greatest of them was Deborah. Not only was she known as a prophetess because of the oracles which she spoke while sitting under her sacred palm,²³ but she is famous for having gathered together the

²⁰ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 271-2.

²¹ Judges 5

²² Judges 17:6

²³ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 26.

ancient sense. That as the ancient Hebrews were a
 nation of poets, so they were a nation of artists.
 They loved the highest art of sculpture and architecture.
 Their poetry, characterized by balance of thought,
 rather than by flow, possessed a vigorous, rugged quality
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20. Robert A. Heiler, Introduction to the Old Testament,
 27. 271-2.
 21. Judges 5.
 22. Judges 17:6.
 23. W. C. C. Gaster and Theodore H. Robinson,
Hebrew Poetry, p. 80.

forces of Israel against the Canaanites. Through Barak she sent out a general call to arms to which most of the tribes responded.

It seems that the invaders had become quite well established in the northern hill country of Ephraim and in the south. The strategic central plain and the fortress of Jerusalem were still firmly dominated by the enemy. Realizing the ominous threat to his power, Sisera, king of the Canaanites, had drawn up what seemed like an invincible army of heavily armed men, horses, and chariots. There they were maneuvering on the plains of Esdraelon while the lightly armed Israelites gathered apprehensively on the wooded slopes to the north.

But victory was on the side of Yahweh. There could have been no other outcome of the battle. He who had discomfited the Egyptians was no less able and ready to deal with the Canaanites.

Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
 I, even I, will sing praise unto Jehovah;
 I will sing praise to Jehovah, the God of Israel.
 Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
 When thou marchest out of the field of Edom,
 The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
 Yea, the clouds dropped water.
 The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah,
 Even you Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

 Jehovah come down for me against the mighty.

 From heaven fought the stars,
 From their courses they fought against Sisera.

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sent out a general call to men to which most of the tribes
responded.

It seems that the invaders had become quite well
established in the northern hill country of Ephraim and in
the south. The situation was very serious and the forces of
Israel were still being defeated by the enemy. Realizing
the obvious threat to the tower, Elimelech, king of the Canaanites,
had drawn up what seemed like an invincible army of heavily
armed men, horses, and chariots. There they were maneuvering
on the plain of Jericho with the lightly armed Israelites
gathered apprehensively on the wooded slopes to the north.
But victory was on the side of Israel. Their hands
have been no other witness of the battle. As the day
discovered the Egyptians was no loss and they to deal
with the Canaanites.

Then, O ye mighty, give ear, O ye princes;
I, even I, will sing praise unto Jehovah:
I will also praise to Jehovah, the God of Israel.
Jehovah, when thou wastest forth out of Seir,
when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
The mountains passed at the presence of Jehovah,
even the Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.
.....
Jehovah come now for us against the enemy.
.....
From heaven fight the enemy,
from their courses that trouble against Israel.

The river Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, march on with strength.²⁴

These verses are filled with dramatic power, especially when illumined by descriptive insight.

Under a heavy rainfall the alluvial plain becomes a morass, in which heavy troops find it impossible to move. The hopes of Israel in the God of battle and of the storm were not disappointed. Yahweh came from Sinai; the mountains shook, the earth trembled, the clouds poured down water; the stars from their courses fought against Sisera. A cloud-burst unundated the plain and made it a sea of mire. The chariots sank in the bog, and the frantic efforts of horses and drivers produced a panic which soon became a rout. The insignificant stream of Kishon became a river choked with chariots, horses, and dead bodies of the Canaanites. The light-armed Israelites, as we may suppose, hung on the skirts of the disheartened and flying foe.²⁵

The song goes on to relate how Sisera fled into the tent of Jael, a Kenite woman. When he asked for refreshment she killed him with a hammer. So the victory was complete, and the land had rest for forty years.²⁶

The poem closes with the lines:

So let all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah:
But let them that love thee be as the sun
when he goeth forth in his might.²⁷

In this ancient poem from the earliest J document

²⁴ Judges 5:3-5, 13b, 19-22.

²⁵ Henry Preserved Smith, Old Testament History, pp. 92-3.

²⁶ Judges 5:31b

²⁷ Judges 5:31a

there are conceptions which unmistakably contributed to the background of eschatological thought. Yahweh is a god of war and of the storm. The forces of nature are at his command. He uses them to destroy the enemy and to save his people. So may it always be.

Two interesting oracles in the E document²⁸ come from the lips of Balaam, and thereby hangs a tale.²⁹ In the days when the Israelites were growing stronger in Canaan, King Balak of Moab sent for Balaam, a soothsayer of Mesopotamia, to curse them. Balaam came, but Yahweh forbade him to speak anything but good of the invaders. The unfortunate man refused bribes but was willing to seek oracles at various places where Balak chose to offer sacrifices. He was sternly warned by an angel of Yahweh, whom his ass saw before he did, to speak only the truth.

In his first oracle³⁰ Balaam declares that he cannot curse Israel whom Yahweh has not cursed. Israel is destined to be a mighty people which shall cover the hills and the valleys and be as impossible to number as particles of dust.

²⁸ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 279.

²⁹ Numbers 22-3

³⁰ Numbers 23:7b-10

In his second oracle³¹ he speaks of the greatness of Yahweh. He is greater than any man. He is the god of Israel. His people shout for him. He brought them out of Egypt with amazing strength. For this they give credit to him, rather than to any divination or enchantment. Like a lion pouncing on his prey he will eat the flesh of his enemies and drink their blood.

Two more oracles of Balaam, from a section of the J document which follows, speak in much the same vein, but betray some later embellishments.³²

How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
Thy tabernacles, O Israel!

.....
Water shall flow from his buckets,
And his seed shall be in many waters,
And his king shall be higher than Agag,
And his kingdom shall be exalted.
God bringeth him forth out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the strength of the wild-ox:
He shall eat up the nations his adversaries,
And shall break their bones in pieces,
And smite them through with his arrows.³³

The dominant idea in these songs is the greatness of Yahweh. He is bloodthirsty, to be sure, but the people should have no less confidence in him for that, especially when he destroys their enemies. In him lies their hope. As one

³¹ Numbers 23:18b-24

³² Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 279.

³³ Numbers 24:5, 7-8

German writer says:

Jahwe, der Helfer gegen Israels Feinde und zugleich dessen Segenquell als König seines Volkes: das ist die Hoffnung der Bileamsprüche, die in der Hauptsache sicher alten Ursprungs sind.³⁴

The Songs of Moses invite consideration. Although they betray unmistakable evidences of additions during the days of the temple and even of the exile, they are inspired by fundamental conceptions.

The first one³⁵ opens with praise for Yahweh in all his greatness.

I will sing of Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously:
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
Jehovah is my strength and song,
He is become my salvation:
This is my God, and I will praise him;
My father's God, and I will exalt him.
Jehovah is a man of war:
Jehovah is his name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea;
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.
The deeps cover them:
They went down into the depths like a stone.
Thy right hand, O Jehovah is glorious in power,
Thy right hand, O Jehovah dasheth in pieces the enemy.
.....
Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods?
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?³⁶

Yahweh is an incomparable god of war who triumphs gloriously and delivers his people.

³⁴ Lorenz Dürr, Ursprung und Ausbau der israelitisch-jüdischen Heilandserwartung, p. 43.

³⁵ Exodus 15:1-18

³⁶ Exodus 15:1-6, 11

— — — — —

Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, when the anger

The second song,³⁷ written at a time when Israel was becoming self satisfied, reminds the people that Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, had rescued them from the wilderness. In spite of Israel's neglect this same god will continue to protect them from the enemy.

See now that I, even I am he,
And there is no god with me:
I kill, and I make alive;
I wound, and I heal;
And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.³⁸

The song closes with a glowing promise of vengeance. Yahweh will whet his glittering sword for slaughter and make his arrows drunk with blood.

Rejoice, O ye nations, his people:
For he will avenge his servants,
And will render vengeance to his adversaries,
And will make expiation for his land, his people.³⁹

The Blessing of Moses⁴⁰ is clearly from exilic or post-exilic days, for it speaks of Yahweh pushing about the nations⁴¹ and promises that the people shall yet offer sacrifices of righteousness.⁴² The place of Levi, the tribe of the priests, is greatly magnified.⁴³ The importance of this song for the present study lies in the supreme confidence which the people

³⁷ Deuteronomy 32

³⁸ Deuteronomy 32:39

³⁹ Deuteronomy 32:43

⁴⁰ Deuteronomy 33

⁴¹ Deuteronomy 33:17

⁴² Deuteronomy 33:19

⁴³ Deuteronomy 33:8-11

The second verse, written at a time when Israel was
becoming self satisfied, reminds the people that Yahweh, and
Yahweh alone, had rescued them from the wilderness. In spite
of Israel's request that some God will continue to protect
them from the enemy.

See how that I, even I am he,
And there is no God with me;
I kill, and I make alive;
I wound, and I heal;
And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.²⁸
The song begins with a ringing promise of vengeance.
Yahweh will show his almighty power for slaughter and make
his chosen drunk with blood.

Rejoice, O ye nations, his people;
For he will avenge his servants,
And will render vengeance to his adversaries,
And will make salvation for his land, his people.²⁹

The blessing of verse 30 is clearly from exile or post-
exile days. For it speaks of Yahweh leading about the nations
and promises that the people shall get other assemblies of
righteousness.³¹ The place of Levi, the tribe of the priests,
is greatly exalted.³² The importance of this song for the
present study lies in the intimate confidence with the people

37	Deuteronomy 32:30
38	Deuteronomy 32:35
39	Deuteronomy 32:36
40	Deuteronomy 32:37
41	Deuteronomy 32:38
42	Deuteronomy 32:39
43	Deuteronomy 32:40

came to feel in the saving power of Yahweh.

Happy art thou, O Israel:
 Who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah,
 The shield of thy help,
 And the sword of thy excellency!
 And thine enemies shall submit themselves unto thee;
 And thou shalt tread upon their high places.⁴³

These songs illustrate a faith which is also discernible in widely scattered prose passages.⁴⁴ The ultimate secret of Israel's hope was not to be found in any series of events, but in the very nature of Yahweh, as the people conceived him to be. He is described in many ways. He is the creator of Israel, the rock upon which all is built, the stone of his people, their sword and shield, the light and the life of Israel, the physician who heals, the only Savior, the strong one from whom creation comes, the king, and the leader of his people in battle. Furthermore, he is holy, a god of righteousness, mercy, and truth. He is the one god for Israel and, in time, the only god of the universe. There is none else beside him. Since he had chosen Israel as his people the inevitable conclusion arose that he would protect and deliver them with all the resources of his mighty power.

Throughout Hebrew history there remained the same confidence which inspired Moses to exclaim whenever the ark

⁴³ Deuteronomy 33:29

⁴⁴ For many such references see Lorenz Dürr, Ursprung und Ausbau der israelitisch-jüdischen Heilandserwartung, pp. 52-3.

moved forward in the desert:

Rise up, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.⁹⁵

The covenant relationship. The usual Hebrew word for covenant in the Old Testament is בְּרִית, the etymology of which is obscure. When a solemn contract was made between two or more parties animals were often cut in pieces and those taking the pledge required to pass between them. Thus originated the phrase, "To cut a covenant." Food was also eaten, since the partaking of salt together was a pledge of lasting friendship among the Semites.

When the Lord Jehovah appeared to Abram⁴⁶ under the evening sky he promised that his seed should be numberless, as the stars in the heavens, and that the land of Canaan should be given to him for an inheritance.⁴⁷ Abram asked how he might know that these things would come to pass. Then, following instructions, he took a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, divided them in pieces and laid the halves over against each other.⁴⁸ So the contract was sealed.

When Jacob made a covenant of peace with Laban, his

⁴⁵ Numbers 10:35b

⁴⁶ After Genesis 17:5 Abram is known as Abraham. The two names seem to have been linguistic variations. See J. Skinner, "Abraham," James Hastings, editor, Dictionary of the Bible. Some scholars discern two original sources.

⁴⁷ Genesis 15:6-7

⁴⁸ Genesis 15:9-10

father-in-law, the men of the family ate food beside the stones which they had raised for a witness⁴⁹ and beside the altar of sacrifice.⁵⁰ These were communion sacrifices in which the human participants and the god shared.⁵¹

Yahweh had been the god of the Kenites⁵² but he appeared to Moses in the burning bush and chose to deliver Israel from Egypt and to become their god. If this new relationship were to become permanent it must be sealed with a covenant. How this was done is found in Exodus 24. Moses carefully explained to the people what the requirements of Yahweh were. They answered with one voice and said, "All the words which Jehovah hath spoken will we do."⁵³ An altar was made of twelve pillars, and sacrifices offered. The blood of the slain beasts Moses caught in a basin. Half of it he sprinkled over the altar and half over the heads of the people, saying:

Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words.⁵⁴

As a final seal of the contract the people ate

⁴⁹ Genesis 31:46

⁵⁰ Genesis 31:54

⁵¹ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, pp. 162-3.

⁵² George A. Barton, The Religion of Israel, pp. 56-61.

⁵³ Exodus 24:3b

⁵⁴ Exodus 24:8

and drank.⁵⁵ This ritual was based on the belief that the blood is the life.⁵⁶ By its application the participants---Yahweh and Israel---were joined together as one. They became one life and one blood, indispensable to each other, since the same vital essence dominated them both.⁵⁷ By the most binding contract of which the Semitic mind could conceive, Yahweh and Israel pledged themselves to each other.

The specific demands which Yahweh made of the people are somewhat obscured by various interpretations.⁵⁸ The J document points to the ritualistic commandments of Exodus 34, E to the agricultural code of Exodus 20, D to the humanistic and ritualistic interpretations of Deuteronomy 12-26, P to the ceremonial law, and the great prophets to a religion of justice and purity. Without doubt, the people were to live by the legal and moral laws which Yahweh laid down through Moses.

The obligations of Yahweh are not stated in so many words, but it seems evident that he was to guide the people in war and peace, be responsible for their prosperity,

⁵⁵ Exodus 24:11

⁵⁶ Leviticus 17:11, 14

⁵⁷ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, pp. 139-40.

⁵⁸ George A. Barton, The Religion of Israel, pp. 64-5.

avenge their wrongs, and be their Lord and King.⁵⁹

The establishment of this new covenant relationship by which the Children of Israel became servants of Yahweh, committed to a distinctive ethical religion which Moses made clear to them, and by which Yahweh was pledged to protect them, may be thought of as a crucial point in the development of Hebrew religion. Deliverance from Egypt had been sensational, but this was fundamental and enduring.

In view of the persistent tendency of Israelites to sin it might have been supposed that Yahweh would desert them. Strangely enough, this possibility never occurred to them. The prophets condemned their idolatry and backsliding in the most vigorous language, but in not a single instance did they suggest that all hope was gone. Jeremiah, for instance, promised "a full end" to the nations which oppressed Israel, but declared that only correction and punishment would come upon his people.⁶⁰

This faith was evidently based upon the nature of Yahweh himself. The writer of Deuteronomy had foreseen some of the troubles into which Israel should fall, but assured his readers:

⁵⁹ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 142.

⁶⁰ Jeremiah 3:11

But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice: for Jehovah thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.⁶¹

In much the same vein an exilic writer concluded the Holiness Code by declaring:

And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah.⁶²

Consciously or unconsciously the Hebrew people counted much on the mercy and lovingkindness of their god. They never would admit that he might desert them. They might be weak, but he was strong. He who had freed them from bondage, led them safely through the wilderness, and given them their own land in which to dwell was always ready to forgive and to redeem. As long as they had faith in him they could believe in the future. Without such a faith there would have been no eschatology and no apocalypse.

⁶¹ Deuteronomy 4:29-30

⁶² Leviticus 26:44-5

For from whence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and
thou shalt find him, when thou shalt seek him with
all thy heart and with all thy soul. Then shalt thou
prophesize, and all these things shall come upon thee, in
the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and
Jehovah shall be thy God: for Jehovah thy God is a merciful
God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor
forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto
thee.

In such the same vein an article written contained the

following Code of Decisions:

And yet for all that, when they are in the land of
their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I
destroy them: for I am merciful, and so break up
covenant with them: for I am merciful, and so break up
will for their sake, because the covenant of their
ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt
in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God:
I am Jehovah.

Consequently or unconsciously the Jewish people sought

much on the mercy and lovingkindness of their God. They
never would admit that he might desert them. They might be
weak, but he was strong. He who had freed them from bondage,
led them safely through the wilderness, and given them their
own land in which to dwell was always ready to forgive and to
redeem. As long as they had faith in him they could believe
in the future. Without such a faith there would have been
no eschatology and no apocalypse.

01. Deuteronomy 32:39-43

02. Leviticus 26:44-46

2. Growing Eschatological Conceptions

Eschatology, as well as prophecy, underwent a long and gradual process of development. While all of the contributing factors cannot be traced with as much clarity as scholars might desire, enough is known to point the way with considerable certainty.

The Day of Yahweh. The conception of the day of Yahweh went back to pre-prophetic times, and may have had something in common with ideas which fostered the day of Venus, the day of Mercury, and the day of Ishtar. In the mind of the Hebrews it was a day of battle, evidently growing out of an understanding of the nature of Yahweh, their god of war and the storm.⁶³ It was he who ruled the lightning, hail, and flood. He fought with earthquake and consuming fire.

It has been suggested that originally there were many days of Yahweh, each one characterized by some physical manifestation, until finally the day was thought of as giving a conclusive demonstration of his power.⁶⁴

The earliest mention of the day of Yahweh is found in Amos.

⁶³ Hugo Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 143.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 144.

Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah!
Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is
darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a
lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and
leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.
Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light?
even very dark, and no brightness in it?⁶⁵

From only a casual reading of these words it is
obvious that Amos is dealing with and condemning a conception
which was already accepted in the popular mind. There were
many who were "desiring" the day of Yahweh because they
thought it would mean light and deliverance. Amos takes
pains to disabuse their minds of any vain and wishful
thinking and to declare that the day would be one of
darkness and catastrophe.

There are those who insist that true eschatology
did not develop until the exile and that this is not an
expression of it.⁶⁶ The distinction which most scholars
bring out is that Amos, while he is not an eschatologist,
recognizes the extravagant hopes of the everyday man in the
market place. He is not looking for a supernatural end of
the age, but he knows that other people are.⁶⁷ This is

⁶⁵ Amos 5:18-20

⁶⁶ Gustav Hölscher, Die Ursprung der jüdischen Eschatologie,
pp. 12-13.

⁶⁷ Lorenz Dürr, Ursprung und Ausbau der israelitisch-
jüdischen Heilandserwartung, p. 13.

significant.

Amos, who believes so firmly in the moral supremacy of Yahweh, insists that religion means righteousness. Repent! Do justly! Relieve the oppressed! Seek Yahweh! Only in this way may the people live. Other nations will be punished as a matter of course, but Israel must go into captivity. Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba, centers of vain worship, shall come to naught.⁶⁶ The Syrians will carry the godless people away.⁶⁷ The drunkards and the gluttonous shall be the first of the captives.⁶⁸ Yahweh will look upon his own people for evil and not for good.⁶⁹ They shall mourn and wail.⁸⁰

All of this is in shocking contrast to popular hopes. Although the people can scarcely understand, Amos gives his reasons. Their transgressions are manifold. They make a mockery of justice, oppressing the poor, living luxurious ease, and failing to worship Yahweh with the heart. Since he has chosen Israel for his own people, freed them from bondage, and blessed them beyond all others, he expects the most from them. When they fail him he will punish them the more severely for their iniquities.⁹¹

⁶⁶ Amos 5:5

⁶⁷ Amos 5:27

⁶⁸ Amos 6:7

⁶⁹ Amos 9:4

⁷⁰ Amos 5:16-17

⁷¹ Amos 3:2

Serious as physical punishment might be, estrangement from Yahweh will seem even more painful.

Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? yea, it shall rise up wholly like the River; and it shall be troubled and sink again, like the River of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it.⁷²

Hosea is in perfect accord with Amos regarding the day of Yahweh, although he does not use the term. Being a near contemporary of Amos during the glittering reign of Jeroboam II, he finds exactly the same social and Moral conditions.

Israel is filled with sin. Yahweh has a controversy with his people because there is no truth, goodness, or knowledge of God among them.⁷³ They swear, lie, kill, steal, and commit adultery.⁷⁴ They worship idols of gold and silver and follow after Baal to their own defilement.⁷⁵ Slaughter and desolation shall fall upon them⁷⁶ and in their agony they

⁷² Amos 8:9-12

⁷³ Hosea 4:1

⁷⁴ Hosea 4:2

⁷⁵ Hosea 5:3; 8:4; 9:1

⁷⁶ Hosea 13:16

shall cry out to the mountains to crush them.⁷⁷ There is no escape from their fate.

The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up. . . . The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he is an unwise son. . . . Repentance shall be hid from my eyes.⁷⁸

Isaiah, like Amos and Hosea, warns Israel as a whole against the day of Yahweh, but adds a new element in declaring that wrath will be turned against Judah and Jersusalem.⁷⁹ He has no doubt that the fateful day must come.⁸⁰ It will bring doom upon the proud and mighty. It will mean the destruction of all idolatry and the exaltation of Yahweh. Wicked men will flee into caves and holes for very terror as Yahweh arises in the glory of his majesty to shake the earth. All manner of woes shall descend upon the people, but the fault is their own because they have rejected knowledge. Drunkenness and iniquity are their joy.

Therefore is the anger of Jehovah kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them; and the mountains tremble, and their dead bodies are as refuse in the midst of the streets.⁸¹

Isaiah maintains a firm faith in Yahweh but is, at the same time, a prophet of doom. His frequent direct and indirect references to the day of Yahweh show that the conception was

⁷⁷ Hosea 10:8

⁷⁸ Hosea 13:12-14

⁷⁹ Isaiah 1:24-5; 3:1-12; 29:5-8

⁸⁰ Isaiah 2:12-21

⁸¹ Isaiah 5:25a

growing in the popular mind. He seems to have no doctrine of world judgment. When Egypt, Ethiopia, Tyre, Moab, and Syria come under the lash of his condemnation it is to fulfill Yahweh's design in breaking Assyria and redeeming Israel. It has been pointed out that the idea of a world wide judgment independent of Israel is later.⁸²

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, recognizes the same evils and the same impending fate of Judah. He cries out against the false security of those who say that no harm can befall them because Yahweh is in their midst.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high place of the forest.⁸³

The message of Zephaniah is entirely devoted to the dreadful day of Yahweh. Probably his work was done somewhere between 639 B. C., which marked the beginning of Josiah's reign, and 600 B. C.⁸⁴ Although critical opinion is divided, Zephaniah probably spoke during the early part of this period before the Deuteronomic reform of 621 B. C. If Zephaniah 1:15-18 refers to the Sythians the prophecy should be dated about 626 B. C.

⁸² R. H. Charles, A Critical History of the Doctrine of the Future Life, p. 93.

⁸³ Micah 3:12

⁸⁴ G. A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, p. 37.

growing in the popular mind. He seems to have no doctrine of
 world judgment. When Egypt, Ethiopia, Assyria, and Syria
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Thus, a contemporary of Isaiah, recognized the same
 evils and the same impending fate of Judah. He urged not
 against the false security of those who say that no harm can
 befall them because Jehovah is in their midst.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a
 field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain
 of the house as the high place of the forest.⁸³

The message of Jeremiah is entirely devoted to the
 disastrous day of Jehovah. Probably his work was done somewhere
 between 605 B. C., which marked the beginning of Josiah's
 reign, and 588 B. C.⁸⁴ Although critical opinion is divided,
 Jeremiah probably spoke during the early part of this
 period before the Babylonian reform of 604 B. C. In
 Jeremiah 1:1-10 refers to the Syrians the prophet surely
 be dated about 625 B. C.

⁸² H. H. Wheeler, A Critical History of the Prophecy
of the Future Life, p. 63.

⁸³ Isaiah 1:12

⁸⁴ G. A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets,
 Vol. II, p. 27.

The Sythians were a barbarous people from the region of the Caspian who poured over the mountains into Mesopotamia and pressed on toward Palestine.⁷⁵ They left Jerusalem untouched, but struck fear into the hearts of her inhabitants. They were a universal scourge, spreading desolation wherever they passed. Yahweh declared through the lips of Zephaniah that all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of his jealousy.⁸⁶ For the first time a prophet introduces the prospect of a world catastrophe originating on foreign soil.⁸⁷

Zephaniah has generally been regarded as a mediocre mind who reflects the thinking of his predecessors, particularly Amos. He draws the materials for his oracles from current history, however, and writes with a rugged realism.⁸⁸ He is courageously frank in his condemnation of Jerusalem.⁸⁹ She has not listened to Yahweh. Her princes are roaring lions. Her judges are evening wolves. Her prophets are light and treacherous. Her priests have

⁸⁵ J. M. P. Smith, Micah, Zephaniah, and Nahum (I. C. C.), p. 162-3.

⁸⁶ Zephaniah 3:8

⁸⁷ Hugo Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 146.

⁸⁸ Theodore H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets,

⁸⁹ Zephaniah 1:7-13; 3:1-5

profaned the temple. Only Yahweh remains righteous, and he must administer correction. Therefore the leaders of the nation are destined to become the sacrificial victims in a great feast spread for the guests of Yahweh, probably the Sythians.

No evil man can escape, for Yahweh will search out every hidden cave with lanterns. Destruction and death are the inevitable results. The fatal day is near at hand, since the invaders, apparently, have already swept through neighboring territory.⁹⁰

The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty men crieth there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities and against the high battlements. And I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land.⁹¹

Like a true prophet Zephaniah calls for repentance. Perhaps Yahweh's fierce anger may yet be turned aside.⁹² Even in the mind of this gloomiest of writers all is not lost.

⁹⁰ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 601.

⁹¹ Zephaniah 1:14-18

⁹² Zephaniah 2:1-3

Judgment of the nations. Another conception, closely associated with the day of Yahweh, which had much to do with the development of eschatology, is that of a judgment of the nations. Nahum is the first prophet to teach that the wrath of Yahweh should fall, not upon Israel, but upon an oppressor. He exults in one great theme---the impending destruction of Nineveh. In 612 B. C. the city fell to the Chaldaeans. This prophet, of whom nothing is known except that he came from Elkosh,⁹³ expresses the rejoicing of a nation and of a world which had been driven to weakness and poverty by the greed of Assyria. In those days she had become a tottering giant, ready to fall before any aggressive power.

Nabopolassar, founder of the New Babylonian empire, mustered the army of Akkad and began his triumphant march from the banks of the Euphrates. He swept all opposition before him. When at last he came to Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, his soldiers took great quantities of plunder and turned the city into "a mound and a ruin." His campaign was one triumphant march through Assyria.⁹⁴

⁹³ Nahum 1:1. According to G. A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, pp. 78-9, three separate traditions locate this town near Nineveh, in Galilee, and in southern Judah.

⁹⁴ See George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible, pp. 492-4 for a description translated from Babylonian tablets.

The book of Nahum comprises only three short chapters. A part of the first is a fragmentary acrostic poem which recalls all of the remarkable physical powers which other eschatological writers had credited to Yahweh. He appears in the whirlwind and in the storm. He gives or withholds water from the rivers and the seas. The mountains, and even the earth, tremble before him. He moves with avenging wrath which is slow in the beginning but like consuming fire when once it is aroused.

The second chapter pictures the soldiers in battle as they storm and conquer the unhappy city. One hears the clash of sword and shield and the rumbling of merderous war chariots through the streets. The smell of warm red blood is in the air, and then choking smoke, as everything that will burn is set to the torch. Moaning and terror are everywhere as the defenses are broken, the walls thrown down, and the proud rulers led away into captivity. Rich plunder of every kind is taken until the den where the lioness had nurtured her whelps lies empty.

The third chapter continues with a vivid description of the utter misery which Nineveh so justly deserves because of her sin.

Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and rapine; the prey departeth not. The noise of the whip, and the noise of the rattling of wheels, and prancing horses, and bounding chariots, the horsemen mounting, and

The book of human compasses only three short chapters.

A part of the first is a fragmentary account of the events which recall all of the remarkable physical powers which other eschatological writers had credited to Kephah. He appears in the wilderness and in the storm. He gives of his gifts water from the stone and the man. The mountains, and even the earth, tremble before him. He moves with evening steps which are also in the beginning but like consuming fire when once it is aroused.

The second chapter pictures the soldiers in battle as they storm and conquer the unhappy city. One hears the clash of sword and shield and the rattle of muskets and the shouting through the streets. The smell of burnt blood is in the air and then drinking water, as everything that will turn is not to the town. Sounding and rumbling are everywhere as the defenses are broken, the walls thrown down, and the proud towers led away into captivity. Rich plunder of every kind is taken until the day where the lioness had captured her prey lies empty.

The third chapter continues with a vivid description of the river which which shines so justly deserves because of her sin.

Now to the third story! It is all full of life and melody; the great goddesses are there. The noise of the whip and the noise of the rattling of wheels, and the rumbling of chariots, the faraway mountains, and

the flashing sword, and the glittering spear, and a multitude of slain, and a great heap of corpses, and there is no end of the bodies; they stumble upon their bodies; because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot. . . . Behold I am against thee, saith Jehovah of hosts, . . . and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. . . . And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?⁹⁵

The book of Nahum has been regarded as containing little of religious interest. It makes no mention of worship or of the moral principles with which the great prophets were concerned. The significance of the book lies, however, in the unshakable faith that the wrath of Yahweh will strike down evil in the world. There is a reversal of the doctrine of Amos that Israel should be punished more severely than any other nation. Yahweh is extending his power and beginning to turn his wrath away from his own people. This change is most important in the development of eschatology.

Obadiah adds some new elements to the rapidly developing eschatological stream. The little book is a hymn of hate against the Edomites who rejoiced over the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. and refused to comfort refugees who came seeking their help.⁹⁶ The Edomites traced their ancestry back to Esau, the twin brother of Jacob. The old story tells

⁹⁵ Nahum 3:1-7

⁹⁶ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 584.

of how the two brothers were rivals from their conception, of how Jacob bought Esau's birthright for a mess of pottage, and of how he finally won Isaac's blessing through a deception.⁹⁷ Although the brothers became reconciled to one another in later life, the two nations which sprang from them were never friendly.

The stronghold of the Edomites was the well protected limestone city of Petra which lay fifty miles south of the Dead Sea. Some time within a hundred years after the fall of Jerusalem the Arabs conquered the rocky fortress and gave Obadiah an incentive to write. He evidently commanded some attention, since Jeremiah 49:14-16 and Joel 2:32, both of which are thought to have been written later, reveal parallels to him.⁹⁸

Obadiah introduces three new elements to eschatology--- bitter hatred of an enemy,⁹⁹ the idea that Israel should finally be exalted¹⁰⁰ and the promise that Yahweh's kingdom should be established.¹⁰¹ These seed thoughts soon germinate, take root, and grow rapidly. Obadiah associates these with a day of Yahweh which is near upon all the nations.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Genesis 25ff

⁹⁸ S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, pp. 319-20.

⁹⁹ Obadiah vs. 10

¹⁰⁰ Obadiah vs. 17

¹⁰¹ Obadiah vs. 21

¹⁰² Obadiah vs. 15

The remnant. The idea of a remnant is as old as the story of Joseph. When he made himself known to his brothers, giving them food, he declared:

God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.¹⁰³

The first of the prophets to make use of the remnant idea is Amos.

Thus saith Jehovah: As the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children be rescued that sit in Samaria in the corner of a couch, and on the silken cushions of a bed.²⁰⁴

Here is a sombre picture, for, according to the figure, life could scarcely remain in such mutilated fragments. This provides a striking beginning of a prophetic doctrine which is destined to develop as the years go by.¹⁰⁵ Amos is not without hope for Israel, but he makes the salvation of the people conditional upon their moral conduct. In one of his most beautiful passages he says:

Seek the good, and not evil, that ye may live; so Jehovah, the God of Hosts, will be with you, as ye say. Hate the evil and love the good, and establish justice in the gate: it may be that Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Genesis 45:7

¹⁰⁴ Amos 3:12

¹⁰⁵ Richard S. Cripps, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, p. 162.

¹⁰⁶ Amos 5:14

The remnant, the Jews of a remnant is an old story.

story of Joseph. When he was himself placed in a prison,

giving them food, he dreamed:

God sent a dream to preserve you a remnant in the world, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.

The first of the prophecies to which was of the remnant

100 is Amos.

Amos with Jeremiah: at the spiritual remnant out of the mouth of the lion was, or a place of an ear, so shall the children be remnant in the world in the corner of a sword, and on the silver cushions of a bed.

There is a remnant of the Jews, according to the figure.

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102 Genesis 45:7

104 Amos 3:12

105 Richard B. Gifford, A Biblical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, p. 102.

106 Amos 3:12

Hosea follows the same reasoning, first presenting an absolutely hopeless picture and then holding out the possibility of divine blessing. He mourns the fact that Ephraim has taken wings and flown away like a bird, leaving no increase. His children will be without a father, unable to grow to maturity. The land is dried up. There is no root and no prospect of fruit. Even the breasts are dry and the wombs miscarry. Yahweh will cast the people out as wanderers among the nations.¹⁰⁷ In the next breath, almost, he pleads for a new way of life which is filled with promise.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap according to kindness; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek Jahovah, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.¹⁰⁸

Hosea interprets the destiny of Israel in the light of his own unfortunate family experience. Gomer had sinned and deserted him, but he brought her back. In the same way, Yahweh would redeem and woo his people until finally they should become faithful to him. He could not give them up.¹⁰⁹

Isaiah, likewise, mingles hope with doom. He sees the necessity of this in the conclusion of the vision when Yahweh calls him to be his prophet. When cities are laid waste, the soil left for a desolation, and the population scattered, the

¹⁰⁷ Hosea 9:10-17

¹⁰⁸ Hosea 10:12

¹⁰⁹ Hosea 2:14-20

...the same reasoning, first ...
...and then holding out the
...of the ...
...and then away like a ...
...his children will be ...
...the land is ...
...and no ...
...which ...
...in the ...
...for a new way of life which is ...

...to ...
...up your ...
...will be ...
...you.

...the ...
...his own ...
...back. In the ...
...and ...
...he could not ...
...therefore, ...
...of this in the ...
...to be the ...
...and the ...

101 House 10:10

101 House 10:10

101 House 10:10

final tenth of the people will be further purged, as by fire, but a "holy seed" shall remain.¹¹⁰ Through the remnant Judah will be saved from the complete death by burning which Sodom and Gomorrah experienced.¹¹¹

The prophet has two sons. One he calls יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נִחֵם, which means "a remnant shall remain." This lad he takes with him to the conduit of the upper pool when he goes to meet Ahaz. There he tells the king that he need not fear any threat of war from the Syrians and Ephraim. They are almost burned out. The security of Judah, he declares, lies in faith.

This same confidence leads him to believe, when Sennacherib and his army appear before Jerusalem, that the city will remain untouched.

Isaiah is realistic enough to know that destruction is determined for many, but is confident that a remnant of Jacob will return. In that day those who escape will lean not on the oppressor nation but on Yahweh.¹¹² Judah shall live and not die.

In a beautifully worded passage Isaiah compares the remnant of Judah to a handful of choice berries left on

¹¹⁰ Isaiah 6:13

¹¹¹ Isaiah 1:9

¹¹² Isaiah 10:20-3

the topmost branches of a fruitful olive tree.¹¹³ Perhaps he means to say that the remnant of the people, though few in number, is made up of the best. Is Isaiah placing confidence in a group of his own disciples from which the prophetic party was afterwards to rise?¹¹⁴

Jeremiah continues the figure of the scattered sheep which Amos had used.¹¹⁵ He condemns the unfaithful shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock, and promises that dire punishment shall fall upon them rather than upon the sheep. Yahweh will set up new shepherds who will be faithful in performing their duties. There is tender comfort in his words.

And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds: and they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith Jehovah.¹¹⁶

At first Yahweh promises little hope for Israel,¹¹⁷ but later invites the people to rejoice and sing because of their renewed strength.¹¹⁸ Jeremiah is extremely unhappy about those

¹¹³ Isaiah 17:6

¹¹⁴ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 108.

¹¹⁵ Jeremiah 23:1-4

¹¹⁶ Jeremiah 23:3-4

¹¹⁷ Jeremiah 6:9

¹¹⁸ Jeremiah 31:7-9

of Judah who go into Egypt,¹¹⁹ and predicts that only a few of them shall ever return to their homeland.¹²⁰

As the minds of the prophets turn to apocalyptic hopes they dream more and more of the righteousness of the remnant and of the benefits which shall come to the favored ones.

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.¹²¹

.....
But in mount Zion there shall be those that escape, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.¹²²

The Messianic Hope. The word "messianic" may refer to a personal messiah or to a messianic age. Ordinarily it has the broader meaning, which includes the new age, the redemption of Israel, judgment, and a personal messiah. It is, therefore, according to Knudson, "about synonymous with the eschatology of the nation."¹²³

The messianic hope was once regarded as coming from the days of the exile and after, but recent scholarship has traced its beginning before the time of the literary prophets. A similar idea may be found in two papyri from

¹¹⁹ Jeremiah 42:15-22

¹²⁰ Jeremiah 44:28

¹²¹ Zephaniah 3:13

¹²² Obadiah vs. 17

¹²³ Albert C. Knudson, The Religious Teachings of the Old Testament, p. 351.

Egypt, one of which glorifies Amenhotep, founder of the Twelfth Dynasty. The other represents the sun-god Re as the ideal king. There is no convincing reason for believing that the conception was borrowed by the Hebrews. Such a hope was commonly expressed among early peoples. It is "primitive" and

. .has its manifest psychological roots. It grows out of the native discontent of the human mind with existing conditions, and out of the natural tendency of men to idealize what is distant in time. It was in this way that the widespread belief in a golden age of the past arose, and the corresponding view of the future would naturally originate in the same manner.¹²⁴

The Hebrews may have been encouraged in their messianic hopes by some knowledge of similar conceptions in other lands, but the parallels are too slight to indicate any real connection. Their own aspirations came from within themselves.

The messianic age was thought of as one of happiness and blessedness in which God ruled. The fact that many passages which deal with the theme make no mention of the person of the messiah shows that he was incidental to the general conception. Yet, as time went on, he became more and more important.

¹²⁴ Albert C. Knudson, The Religious Teachings of the Old Testament, p. 357.

The word "messiah" means "the anointed one." In the Old Testament this term is used in a general sense, so that it might apply to priests,¹²⁵ to the kings of Israel,¹²⁶ and even to Cyrus.¹²⁷

Many references to the messiah are associated with David, the great king. The promise is given to David through Nathan that

Jehovah will make thee a house.¹²⁸

.....
And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure
forever before thee: thy throne shall be established
forever.¹²⁹

Such words as these, although not eschatological in themselves, could hardly be forgotten during the decline and fall of the nation.

David had been the greatest of the kings. A clever warrior and an able administrator, he had extended the borders of Israel to include practically the whole of Palestine. Trade was good. The political prestige of the thriving nation was high. It was the beginning of a short-lived golden age, extending through the resplendent reign of Solomon until the unhappy division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Later generations remembered him as

¹²⁵ Leviticus 4:5; 6:22

¹²⁶ I Samuel 12:13

¹²⁷ Isaiah 45:1

¹²⁸ II Samuel 7:11b

¹²⁹ II Samuel 7:16

a loyal servant of Yahweh and accorded him a place second only to Moses. As one writer puts it,

The crowning tribute to him. . . was paid by the dreamers who contemplated the coming of an ideal age in which Yahweh and Yahweh's will should be supreme, when all that was evil should vanish, and men should live a life of perfect happiness and peace. Many of them could find no better expression of this ideal than to say that another David should arise, and that the perfect king who should bring all good to Israel should bear his name and character.¹³⁰

Hosea contains one brief messianic reference.

Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days.¹³¹

There are several passages in Isaiah bearing on the messiah, some of which have been misinterpreted. In the course of Isaiah's conversation with Ahaz when he is advising him not to fear Rezin and Pekah¹³² he remarks that the Lord will give a sign. A virgin shall conceive and bear a son who shall be called Immanuel. These words have no messianic significance. The prophet goes on to assure the king that before this child is out of his babyhood---beyond the stage of eating butter and honey, and able to choose between good and evil---the threat of the two kings shall be past.

¹³⁰ T. H. Robinson, A History of Israel, p. 201.

¹³¹ Hosea 3:5

¹³² Isaiah 7:1-17

The Hebrew word עַלְמָה , which is usually translated "virgin," may mean a girl of marriageable age or a young woman recently married. In view of this fact, on which the lexicons agree, the birth of the child has no implications of a miraculous nature. The virgin might be any young mother with her baby.

Isaiah 11:1-5 is decidedly messianic in a general sense, but cannot be said to present a picture of Jesus.

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit.¹³³

Here is definite reference to a king of the Davidic line. The spirit of Yahweh shall give him wisdom, strength, and understanding so that he will delight in the fear of his god and know how to judge with equity. The poor and the meek will find in him a worthy champion. Such a man was Solomon in the early part of his reign. But this is not all.

He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.¹³⁴

Evidently his government is to be based upon a merciless display of force. At the same time, it will be guided by principles of righteousness.

In Jeremiah the main emphasis is upon a king of the Davidic line. Yahweh promises to raise unto David "a righteous

¹³³ Isaiah 11:1

¹³⁴ Isaiah 11:4

Branch," who will rule wisely in justice and righteousness.¹³⁵
 The king and his princes shall ride on horses and in chariots,
 as mighty potentates, so that Jerusalem shall be established
 forever.¹³⁶ Jerusalem, in that day, will be a center of
 worship and righteousness. When "David" is king there will
 be no more foreign oppression.¹³⁷

The closing paragraph of Amos constructs a picture of
 the messianic kingdom. The passage assumes apocalyptic
 significance in view of the fact that it is generally
 regarded as exilic.¹³⁸

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David
 that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I
 will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the
 days of old.¹³⁹

The messianic hope was far from being entirely selfish.
 There should be peace among men and even a new covenant with
 the animals, birds, and serpents. All should dwell together
 in safety.¹⁴⁰ The wolf and the lamb, the cow and the bear, the
 leopard and the kid, the growing child and the asp, and the
 infant and the adder shall all mingle in harmonious
 contentment.

¹³⁵ Jeremiah 23:5; 33:16 ¹³⁶ Jeremiah 17:25

¹³⁷ Jeremiah 30:8

¹³⁸ Richard S. Cripps, A Critical & Exegetical
Commentary on the Book of Amos, pp. 270-1.

¹³⁹ Amos 9:11

¹⁴⁰ Hosea 2:18

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.¹⁴¹

In those days people of all the nations shall seek eagerly for the blessings of righteousness which are to be found in Jerusalem. They will come of their own accord. They will beat their swords and spears into instruments of peace, and put away the arts of war.¹⁴² The very soil of the land will be transformed, bearing rich and abundant harvests, so that the people may enjoy all the fruits of their labors.¹⁴³

In the minds of the prophets this new kind of a world was to be a very real one. Not spiritual, beyond the realm of time and sense, but concrete and earthly. They looked for the nature of Yahweh to be fused into the world as they knew it. Therefore the redemption of Israel and of the world involved some remarkable changes.

It must be kept in mind that there were two streams of thought. Deutero-Isaiah and those prophets who followed him developed the idea of a universal gospel which should be for the blessing of all the nations. The apocalyptic writers thought of the new age more and more in terms of judgment of the nations and of benefits for Israel. Ezekiel marked the parting of the ways. In many places, however, the paths recross each other, and may sometimes be confused.

¹⁴¹ Isaiah 11:9

¹⁴² Isaiah 2:2-4

¹⁴³ Amos 9:13-15

CHAPTER IV

POST-EXILIC APOCALYPSE

1. Ezekiel, the Father of Apocalyptic

As a young man¹ Ezekiel is thought to have been carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the first captivity under Jehoiachin,² which occurred in 597 B. C. While in exile he lived in Tel-Abib, where the largest community of Jews in Babylon was located.³

During the early part of his life, Ezekiel was, then, a contemporary of Jeremiah. Jeremiah had begun his work about 626 B. C. and continued on in Jerusalem until he went to Egypt in 586 B. C., or shortly after. In Jeremiah is seen the culmination of pre-exilic prophecy.

Ezekiel was the great prophet of the exile. Not only were the conditions under which he labored greatly different from those which his predecessors found, but his message assumed new and distinctive characteristics. With him there developed a fundamental transformation of prophecy.⁴

¹ Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 10.6.3

² II Kings 24:8-17

³ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 212.

⁴ Lods, op. cit., pp. 211-32.

There has been considerable critical study concerning the manner and place in which the book of Ezekiel was written.⁵ If taken to Babylon in 597 B. C. did Ezekiel return to Jerusalem to record an eye-witness account of the circumstances which led up to the final destruction of the city? Was he not taken to Babylon at all until one of the later transportations? Did he, then, preach or write in Jerusalem, as well as in Babylon? Is the book a unity, as early scholars hold, or was it subject to Babylonian reaction and additions over a period of some two hundred years?

These are complicated and difficult problems which scholars have not yet solved. The general trend of opinion, however, seems to lean toward the conclusions that Ezekiel was taken to Babylon in the first deportation and remained there; that he kept in sufficiently close touch with events in Jerusalem by letter or by consultation with travellers to understand what was happening; and that, while the major part of the book was written by Ezekiel's own hand, it was subject to considerable reaction, particularly in the legal sections.

Ezekiel possessed an extremely complex and fascinating personality. Duhm notes that he was, first of all, an

⁵ See W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, pp. 318-25 and Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 227-31.

ecstatic, and goes so far as to question whether or not he can properly be called a true prophet.⁶ He was subject to strange and awesome visions of the heavenly court, one of which completely overwhelmed him for seven days.⁷ He was carried in spirit by the hair of his head to Jerusalem where he was able to witness the abominations in the temple.⁸ He was stricken with dumbness⁹ until Yahweh opened his mouth.¹⁰ He lay paralyzed on his left side for 190 days¹¹ in mourning for the fall of Samaria, and on his right side for 90 days in mourning for Judah.¹² With the power of a clairvoyant he anticipated the death of his wife¹³ and was confronted with the certainty that Jerusalem would fall.

These reactions have been explained by some by saying that Ezekiel was subject to nervous and physical disorders but, as Knudson points out, no prophet who was ill could have been responsible for the significant contributions which

⁶ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, p. 232.

⁷ Ezekiel 3:15

⁸ Ezekiel 8

⁹ Ezekiel 3:26

¹⁰ Ezekiel 24:27; 33:22

¹¹ The Hebrew text reads 390 days, but Adolphe Lods points out in his The Prophet and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 215-6, that the latter number, which is given in the Septuagint, is preferred.

¹² Ezekiel 4:4-8

¹³ Ezekiel 24:15-18

constituted, and goes so far as to specify whether or not he
 can properly be called a true prophet. B. was subject to
 extreme and extreme visions of the heavenly world, and of
 which constantly overwhelmed him for seven days. He was
 carried in spirit by the will of his mind to Jerusalem where
 he was able to witness the administration in the temple. B.
 was returned with darkness until he was opened his mouth. B.
 He lay paralyzed on his left side for 120 days in mourning
 for the fall of Jerusalem, and on his right side for 60 days in
 mourning for Judah. B. With the power of a clairvoyant he
 anticipated the death of the wife, and was confronted with
 the certainty that Jerusalem would fall.
 These visions have been explained by some by saying
 that Kaddish was subject to nervous and physical disorders,
 but, as it would be hard to say, no prophet who was ill would
 have been responsible for the significant predictions which

3. Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc.

4. Ezekiel 3:1-3

5. Ezekiel 3:22-24

6. The prophet said that 300 years, but actually less
 points out in his prophecy and the name of Jerusalem
 is, B. B. that the last of the world, which is given in the
 Revelation, is predicted.

7. Ezekiel 4:1-2

are credited to Ezekiel.¹⁴ It must be said, however, that the man was extremely sensitive.

It is possible that many of the peculiarities of Ezekiel were due to a deliberate choice of method, just as he employed so many literary devices. He made effective use of parables, as in his illustration of the vine-tree and the branches;¹⁵ of allegories, as in the description of the lioness and her whelps¹⁶ or of the Jerusalem caldron;¹⁷ of riddles, as in the picture of the great eagles and the cedars;¹⁸ of lyrics, as in his lament over the mountains of Israel¹⁹ and in his "Song of the Sword;"²⁰ and of symbolic actions, as when he cut his hair²¹ and laid mock siege to Jerusalem.²² He might just as well have designed his visions to convey an unmistakable message, and it would be strange if he did not, at least to some extent. At the same time, it could hardly be said that Ezekiel was as deliberate as Zechariah is thought to have been.²³

¹⁴ Albert C. Knudson, The Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 219.

¹⁵ Ezekiel 15

¹⁶ Ezekiel 19

¹⁷ Ezekiel 24:1-4

¹⁸ Ezekiel 17

¹⁹ Ezekiel 6

²⁰ Ezekiel 21

²¹ Ezekiel 5:1-4

²² Ezekiel 4:1-3

²³ Cf. ante, p. 99.

Ezekiel has been called "The Father of Apocalyptic."

In supporting this estimate Duhm insists that, while the exilic prophet was not a complete apocalyptist, he was the first to employ the developing characteristics of apocalyptic in an effective manner.²⁴

In amplifying the same thought Dürr goes into some detail to show how this is true.²⁵ He says that Ezekiel offered a catechism of messianic expectations which later developed into apocalyptic doctrines. In this, and other ways, he was the originator of prophetic theology. His style was meditative--quite different from that of the former prophets. In his liking for detail and in his response to deeply emotional experiences he developed a tendency which delights in the revelation of hidden things. The parable form, he says, is apocalyptic. He points out that Ezekiel framed his descriptions in terms of that which was "like" the reality. In his recognition of the spirit of God and of the angel of Yahweh there was the beginning of intermediaries. This seemed necessary because of the transcendental nature of Yahweh. The address of Yahweh to

²⁴ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, p. 233.

²⁵ Lorenz Dürr, Wollen und Wirken der alttestamentlichen Propheten, pp. 122-34.

the prophet as "the son of man" is less personal than his manner of divine revelation to the former prophets and further implies the transcendental nature of Yahweh. This expression is found some ninety times in Ezekiel.

It should be noted here that if Ezekiel was the "father" of apocalyptic then Isaiah was the "grandfather." Although primarily a prophet, the earlier leader pictured Yahweh as considerably removed from the ways of men. Isaiah's vision of the heavenly court²⁶ includes the trappings of awesome majesty. In his insistence that Judah must trust Yahweh implicitly²⁷ he was depending more upon divine power to preserve the nation and the holy city than upon human effort. This observation is another evidence of the fact that the beginnings of apocalyptic reach far back in Hebrew history.

Nor was Ezekiel entirely an apocalypticist. An analysis of his dominant ideas will reveal in what measure he contributed to the prophetic and the apocalyptic movements.

Judah is sinful. Ezekiel devotes more space to the sins of the people and speaks of them in more impressive terms than does any other writer of the Old Testament. In this he is preeminently a prophet. The sections under

²⁶ Isaiah 6

²⁷ Cf. ante, pp. 45-9.

consideration are scattered through chapters 1 to 39, and must be dated before the fall of Jerusalem.

In the beginning of his ministry Ezekiel is instructed to preach to a people who are rebellious, impudent, and stiffnecked, who have transgressed and whose fathers transgressed.²⁸ Whether or not the people give heed to his preaching they will "know that there hath been a prophet among them."²⁹

Ezekiel is greatly alarmed over the readiness of the people to turn to idolatry. He sees a vision of the abominations which are being committed even in the Jerusalem temple.³⁰ Not only are pagan images allowed, but the priests and elders carry on secret rites, thinking that Yahweh will not see.³¹ The women follow the Adonis cult, weeping for Tammuz.³² Leslie points out that this is the only specific mention of the Adonis cult in the Old Testament and that it gives an authentic picture of the manner in which it was practiced.³³

²⁸ Ezekiel 2:3-4

²⁹ Ezekiel 2:5

³⁰ Ezekiel 8

³¹ Ezekiel 8:12

³² Ezekiel 8:14

³³ Elmer A. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 220-1.

Ezekiel does not deal with specific sins of everyday conduct as thoroughly as does Jeremiah in his Temple Sermons,³⁴ but he is more outspoken in his insistence that the children of Israel are proving unfaithful to Yahweh. Israel and Judah are both harlots who seek the favor of other lovers in the most brazen manner.³⁵ The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Chaldeans have violated their virginity for selfish gratification, but cannot be as Yahweh.

Chapter sixteen tells the story of how Jerusalem was the despised and forsaken offspring of an Amorite father and a Hittite mother whom Yahweh rescued because of his love and pity for her. Instead of responding as a dutiful daughter should, she has fallen into most despicable whoredoms. All through the chapter whoredom and harlotry are clearly meant to represent unfaithfulness to Yahweh. Jerusalem is more guilty than any shameful woman.

How weak is thy heart, saith the Lord Jehovah, seeing that thou doest all these things, the work of an impudent harlot; in that thou buildest thy vaulted place at the head of every way, and makest thy lofty place in every street, and hast not been as a harlot, in that thou scornest hire. A wife that committeth adultery! that taketh strangers instead of her husband! They give gifts to all harlots; but thou givest gifts to all thy lovers and bribest them, that they may come unto thee on every side of whoredoms.³⁶

³⁴ Jeremiah 7, 8

³⁵ Ezekiel 23

³⁶ Ezekiel 16:30-33

Chapter twenty, in a rapid survey of Hebrew history, shows how the people have continually ignored the ordinances and statutes which Yahweh gave them. They failed to observe the sabbath. They were careless about their offerings. They resorted to heathen abominations, Baal worship, and even child sacrifice.

Ezekiel is much more of a ritualist than any prophet who precedes him. He defines sin in terms of failure to worship Yahweh properly and to observe the law. He gives some attention to dishonesty, oppression, and immorality,³⁷ but does not have the social outlook of an Amos.

Jerusalem will fall. Ezekiel is very explicit in his warnings that the end is near. The monarchy is tottering. He compares Jerusalem to a lioness whose whelps, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, have been trapped by Egypt and Babylon.³⁸ Again, she is like a vine whose main branch, Zedekiah, has been severed and left to wither in the wilderness.³⁹

He develops the same theme still further in the parable of the eagles and the cedar branches.⁴⁰ A great eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, took the top of the tree to Babylon in the first deportation. He left a seed, King Zedekiah, but Zedekiah faithlessly sought the favor of Egypt and will also

³⁷ Ezekiel 22:6-12

³⁸ Ezekiel 19:1-9

³⁹ Ezekiel 19:10-14

⁴⁰ Ezekiel 17

be brought to judgment in Babylon.

The people will soon be compelled to leave Jerusalem and go as captives to Babylon.⁴¹ If they want to save any of their belongings they must escape in the darkness. All but a few of the people will be scattered through the nations. Those who imagine that the catastrophe will be delayed are only deceiving themselves.

Son of man, what is this proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The day is at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision.

.....
Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of times that are afar off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: There shall none of my words be deferred any more, but the word which I speak shall be performed, saith the Lord Jehovah.⁴²

The most fearsome aspect of Yahweh's punishment is revealed in the Song of the Sword.⁴³ Deadly slaughter will do its work in Judah and Jerusalem, leaving only a few survivors. Furthermore, since Jerusalem was blessed more than any of the nations, Yahweh expected more of her. Since she has proven faithless one third of her people will die of pestilence, one third will fall by the sword, and a remaining third will be

⁴¹ Ezekiel 12

⁴² Ezekiel 12:22-3, 26-8

⁴³ Ezekiel 21

scattered to the winds.⁴⁴

Duhm notes that there is a harshness in the teaching of Ezekiel which is quite different from the tender sympathy of Jeremiah.⁴⁵ It may be pointed out, however, that whereas Jeremiah cherishes some hopes that the city may be saved, Ezekiel is absolutely convinced that the end is near. He is compelled to justify the impending turn of events. When the worst has taken place he is ready with a message of hope.

As a voice crying out against the sins of his people and as a herald of divine punishment Ezekiel remains primarily a prophet. In other respects, as now becomes apparent, he is an apocalypticist.

Yahweh is absolute. It is difficult to select a word which describes Ezekiel's conception of Yahweh, and any one chosen must be subject to qualification. Yahweh is holy in that his nature is awesome and majestic. He is transcendent in that he is far removed from the range of ordinary human perception. He is supreme in that he rules the affairs of all men and of all nations. He is self sufficient in that he governs for the sake of his own glory. If all of these meanings can be included it may be said, according to

⁴⁴ Ezekiel 5:5-12

⁴⁵ Bernhard Duhm, Israels Propheten, p. 234.

Ezekiel, that Yahweh is absolute.

The absolute nature of Yahweh is seen in Ezekiel's vision of him.⁴⁶ Out of the mysterious north there is blown a cloud of fire which bears the radiance of glowing metal. Four living creatures with the likeness of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, and each with four wings, face each direction of the compass and move together. These creatures, suggested in part by Isaiah's vision of the seraphim and in part by weird Babylonian mythology, may represent intelligence, dignity, strength, and speed. They are led in their movements by the spirit. Four wheels with high and dreadful rims filled with eyes bear them this way and that and even into the air. Through them the spirit moves freely and sees all things. Out of the crystal firmament of heaven above, from whence there comes the tumultuous rushing sound of wings and waters, Yahweh appears. Fashioned like a man, he is extremely majestic, being surrounded by brightness and flaming fire. Ezekiel is thrown prostrate, but commanded to stand on his feet and receive his commission. Yahweh tells him to go and preach to a sinful people.

Such a picture is to be viewed with the mind rather than with the eye. On canvas it would seem grotesque and

⁴⁶ Ezekiel 1:4-28

...that ... is ...

The ... of ... is ...

... of ... of the ... there is ...

... of ... the ... of ...

... living ... the ... of ...

... and ... with ...

... of the ... and ...

... in ... of the ...

... of ... and ...

... and ... they are ...

... the ... with ...

... with ... and ...

... the ... and ...

... of the ... above ...

... the ... of ...

... the ... of ...

... being ... and ...

... is ... to ...

... and ... to ...

... to a ...

... a ... to ...

... it ... and ...

trivial. The symbolism is evidently intended to express the tremendous mystery and limitless power of the divine being.

This vision influences Ezekiel throughout all of his ministry. The spirit of the wheels bears him in bitterness and heat to Tel-Abib, the dwelling place of the captives, where he sits so overwhelmed that he cannot speak for seven days.⁴⁷ The glowing likeness of Yahweh carries him to Jerusalem⁴⁸ where the vision appears again.⁴⁹ Out of the midst of the whirling wheels he is commanded to take glowing coals with his own hands and scatter them over the unfortunate city. The same spirit guides his thought as, several years later, he pictures the majesty of Yahweh in the new temple.⁵⁰

Apocalyptic is fundamentally dependent upon a conception of a divine being who is absolute. The importance of Ezekiel in developing such a theology can hardly be overestimated.

Yahweh will destroy the nations. Another conception which is essential to Hebrew apocalyptic is the confidence that Yahweh will punish the enemies of Israel. Ezekiel accepts this doctrine which had already begun to develop and devotes eight full chapters to a description of how Yahweh

⁴⁷ Ezekiel 3:12-15

⁴⁹ Ezekiel 10

⁴⁸ Ezekiel 8:1-4

⁵⁰ Ezekiel 43:1-5

will bring vengeance upon Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, and several smaller nations.⁵¹ These will receive no mercy because they have abused Yahweh's people and gloried in their ruin. Desolation and slaughter will be the common fate. Tyre is cited for contempt because in all the pride of her wealth she thinks herself to be a god.⁵² The great river of Egypt will be dried up, causing widespread disaster, because Yahweh is against all that land.⁵³

Strangely enough, there is no condemnation of Babylon. Possibly this is because Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned several times as an instrument of the divine wrath.⁵⁴

There is absolutely no hope for the nations. They will come, in the end, to recognize the oft repeated revelation that "I am Yahweh,"⁵⁵ but they can never expect to enjoy the blessings of true worship or of divine favor. Ezekiel and other apocalyptists do not share the universalism of Deutero-Isaiah and of those who follow him in the prophetic stream.

Ezekiel makes use of the popular conception of the day of Yahweh.

⁵¹ Ezekiel 25-32

⁵² Ezekiel 28:1-2

⁵³ Ezekiel 29:1-7

⁵⁴ Ezekiel 26:7; 29:18, 19; 30:10

⁵⁵ Some variety of this expression is found sixty times in Ezekiel, and seventeen in these chapters. It gives emphasis to the limitless supremacy of Yahweh.

Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Wail ye, Alas for the day! For the day is near, even the day of Jehovah is near; it shall be a day of clouds, a time of the nations.⁵⁶

The most distinctive apocalyptic section of Ezekiel, according to Duham,⁵⁷ is the picture of Yahweh's final triumph over the earthly powers which are symbolized by Gog of Magog.⁵⁸ It has been suggested that this passage may be from a later hand than Ezekiel's.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it seems to be in line with the trend of his thought. Although the enemy nations specified by name are to be rendered helpless before Israel's restoration, the decisive conflict with the symbolic powers will follow it. The battle with Gog, in which Yahweh completely triumphs, marks the last desperate resurgence of evil.

This wild barbarian sweeps down from the north, as did the Sythians. His mighty army threatens every defenseless city. But Yahweh intervenes with supernatural power.

Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all

⁵⁶ Ezekiel 30:2-3

⁵⁷ Bernhard Duham, Israels Propheten, pp. 236-7.

⁵⁸ Ezekiel 38

⁵⁹ See G. A. Cooke, The Book of Ezekiel (I. C. C.), Vol. II, p. 406.

the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for the sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And with pestilence and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the enemy people that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.⁶⁰

There will be a tremendous slaughter over all the mountains of Israel so that even after the wild beasts and the birds devour the flesh of the enemy seven months will be required to bury their remains.⁶¹

This is true apocalyptic in that the final victory is brought about by a cataclysmic upheaval which Yahweh alone controls.

The individual may live. Since Israel as a nation is to be slain by the sword and scattered throughout the nations, Ezekiel is compelled to discover some means by which faith in Yahweh may be preserved. This he finds in the freedom of responsible individuals. The ancient doctrine had been that the nation was a unit. Children were to be blessed or punished according to the deeds of their fathers.⁶² Ezekiel insists that this is no longer true.⁶³

⁶⁰ Ezekiel 38:19b-23

⁶¹ Ezekiel 39:12

⁶² Deuteronomy 5:9

⁶³ Ezekiel 18

What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.⁶⁴

A man shall live or die according to his deeds. A child shall live or die according to his own deeds, and not those of his father. Yahweh will reward righteousness and punish evil in individuals, rather than in families or in the nation. In this there is democratic equality.⁶⁵

It has been pointed out that whereas Jeremiah teaches personal religion through intimate fellowship with God, Ezekiel teaches personal responsibility through a realization that God must judge in fairness.⁶⁶

It has been further pointed out that there are many flaws in Ezekiel's doctrine of individualism which are later challenged by Job and Ecclesiastes.⁶⁷ Earthly rewards and punishments simply are not meted out according to personal conduct. Nevertheless, Ezekiel does much to establish a trend of thought which develops on through apocalyptic literature and even into the Christian gospel.

⁶⁴ Ezekiel 18:2-4

⁶⁵ Ezekiel 18:25; 33:17-20

⁶⁶ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 252.

⁶⁷ Adolphe Lods, The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, pp. 222-3.

In order that the individual and the nation may not die Yahweh will transform the very nature of his people.

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord Jehovah.⁶⁸

Restoration is assured. After Yahweh has completed the punishment of his people he will bring them back to their own land where they will serve him perfectly.⁶⁹ He will take delight in their offerings and oblations. All lewdness shall cease out of the land.⁷⁰ Yahweh will gather his scattered people as a shepherd gathers his flock.⁷¹

And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it.⁷²

The very soil of the land will be transformed so that it may bear abundant crops and support a teeming population.⁷³ The land will be like a garden of Eden.⁷⁴ Ezekiel is explicit

⁶⁸ Ezekiel 11:19-21

⁶⁹ Ezekiel 20:33-44

⁷⁰ Ezekiel 23:48

⁷¹ Ezekiel 34:1-16

⁷² Ezekiel 34:23-4

⁷³ Ezekiel 36:8-15, 29-30

⁷⁴ Ezekiel 36:35

in his insistence that restoration will come for the sake of Yahweh's glory and not because of any virtue in Israel.⁷⁵ As a result, however, Israel shall be made clean and experience a genuine conversion.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.⁷⁶

The apocalyptic nature of these expectations become more apparent when it is pointed out that they are made to depend completely upon the will of God rather than upon the efforts of men.

The most striking portrayal of apocalyptic restoration is seen in the transformation of the valley of dry bones.⁷⁷ As the spirit of Yahweh moves over this hopeless spectacle of desolation breath enters into the bones. Flesh, sinews, and skin are laid upon them until they become living beings again.⁷⁸ These people are the whole house of Israel who thought that all hope was lost. Even the graves will be opened.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Ezekiel 36:22-3

⁷⁶ Ezekiel 36:26-8

⁷⁷ Ezekiel 36

⁷⁸ Ezekiel 36: 4-6

⁷⁹ Ezekiel 36:11-3

And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: and ye shall know that I, Jehovah have spoken it and performed it, saith Jehovah.⁸⁰

There is another reference to "my servant David" who will rule in justice.⁸¹ Evidently Ezekiel believes that the kingdom will eventually be restored. In this new government "my princes"⁸² shall rule and divide their inheritance with their sons,⁸³ showing that the messiah is not an individual but a dynasty. At that time there is to be an everlasting covenant of peace.⁸⁴

My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.⁸⁵

Blessings will come through ritual. Since Ezekiel is a priest⁸⁶ his mind naturally turns to the necessity of formal worship. Never does he condemn feasts and sacrifices as Amos and Isaiah do. He insists always that ritual be conducted in a proper manner. The closing nine chapters of his book are devoted to a detailed description of the new temple which is to be and of the religious activities which he hopes will center about it.

⁸⁰ Ezekiel 37:14

⁸¹ Ezekiel 37:24-6

⁸² Ezekiel 45:8

⁸³ Ezekiel 46:16

⁸⁴ Ezekiel 37:26-8

⁸⁵ Ezekiel 37:27

⁸⁶ Ezekiel 1:3

Although a modern reader usually finds this section tedious he should realize that such a blue print was just what a frustrated Judaism needed to preserve hope for the future. The temple was gone, but there would be a new one. The law could not be kept perfectly in a strange land but the time would come when all of the ordinances might once more be observed. The people could and must honor Yahweh through ritual. The careful student will observe that the apocalyptists gradually come to place more dependence upon ritual than upon the demands of personal conduct.

A beautiful picture of the blessings which result from worship is seen in the vision of the healing stream.⁸⁶ From under the altar of the new temple there comes forth a spring of water which grows to mighty proportions as it flows across the land. It sweetens everything it touches, besides providing much fish for food and giving life to the soil.

The closing paragraph of the book describes the measurements and gates of Jerusalem.⁸⁷ The new name for the city will be *יהוה שמה*, "Yahweh is there."

It has been said that apocalypse and legalism, the two chief elements in later Judaism, "practically owe their

⁸⁶ Ezekiel 47

⁸⁷ Ezekiel 48:30-5

origin to Ezekiel."⁸⁸ As a matter of fact, they are very closely bound up together.

2. Apocalyptic Fragments in Isaiah 13-23

These ten chapters contain some genuine oracles of Isaiah, some prophetic additions, and several passages which were written many years later in anticipation of the doom of various nations.⁸⁹ These last, which are classed as apocalyptic, will be treated in this section.

Babylon will fall. The longest of these passages, and the most significant, deals with Babylon, the oppressor.⁹⁰ The time is evidently about 540 B. C., or shortly before the rise of Cyrus who overthrew the Babylonians in 538 B. C.⁹¹ The exile is almost over. In the days of Isaiah Assyria was endangering world security; but a century and a half have slipped by, an interval of years which saw the fall of Nineveh and the rise of the New Babylonian empire. Even now Babylon has passed her prime, and the restless captives

⁸⁸ John Edgar McFadyen, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 174.

⁸⁹ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 443.

⁹⁰ Isaiah 13:1-14:23

⁹¹ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 144.

no longer have the respect for her which Ezekiel felt.

Several characteristic eschatological ideas may easily be recognized. Yahweh will use the heathen powers of the world to do his bidding. A great army of "my mighty men" are being assembled. They are even called "my consecrated ones."⁹² This war is a holy enterprise. The great, tumultuous, heathen host, which Yahweh is mustering from a far country is evidently made up of the Medes.⁹³ They are merciless warriors, having little regard for Babylonian treasures. They kill and destroy.

The greatest demonstration of Yahweh's power will come not in the clash of armies, but in the loosening of the forces of nature. This is the day of Yahweh. Destruction is from the Almighty.

Therefore shall all hands be feeble, and every heart of man shall melt. . . . Behold the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger. . . . For the stars of heaven and the constellations shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. . . . I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.⁹⁴

The reason for Yahweh's consuming wrath is his strong indignation against evil. There is no word about Israel's sin. Yahweh will punish "the world" for its evil,⁹⁵ and

⁹² Isaiah 13:3

⁹³ Isaiah 13:17

⁹⁴ Isaiah 13:6-13

⁹⁵ Isaiah 13:11

particularly Babylon. That land shall be made utter desolation as Sodom and Gomorrah.⁹⁶ The people shall be pursued and slaughtered by the Medes until only the desert beasts can possibly remain where they have been.⁹⁷

As for the people of Israel, they shall enjoy rest, because Yahweh has compassion upon them.⁹⁸ They shall live securely in their own land and be served by their former oppressors who become their captive slaves.⁹⁹ The blessedness of Jacob is the more remarkable because the power of wickedness, which ruled the nations, is broken¹⁰⁰ and the pride of Babylon is gone down to Sheol.¹⁰¹

Another section dealing with Babylon¹⁰² comes from about the same time,¹⁰³ but is evidently written by another hand. Media and Elam are to overwhelm Babylon.¹⁰⁴ In the tremendous world upheaval Israel is to be as the good grain threshed out of the chaff.

These expectations regarding the impending fall of Babylon clarify the patterns for many future apocalyptic

⁹⁶ Isaiah 13:11 ⁹⁷ Isaiah 13:17-22

⁹⁸ Isaiah 14:1 ⁹⁹ Isaiah 14:2

¹⁰⁰ Isaiah 14:5-8 ¹⁰¹ Isaiah 14:12-20

¹⁰² Isaiah 21:1-10

¹⁰³ Albert C. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 144.

¹⁰⁴ Isaiah 21:2

hopes. These patterns will continue to change. For instance, there will be less dependence upon heathen armies to carry out the will of Yahweh and more upon his supernatural power. The world will seem more and more evil and Israel more righteous.

Moab will perish. A second passage¹⁰⁵ deals with the woes of the Moabites. They were relatives of the Hebrews, having descended from Lot.¹⁰⁶ They lived in the high country east of the Dead Sea. They were not always unfriendly, for Ruth was a Moabitess.¹⁰⁷ They were originally similar in language and in religion to the Hebrews.¹⁰⁸

The passage under consideration speaks of the desolation which shall come upon Moab because of her pride,¹⁰⁹ but there is a restraint of animosity and even a feeling of sympathy. It may be that a Moabite lament for some military defeat was rewritten as a Hebrew oracle against her.¹¹⁰ There is an element of condemnation, but by no means as much apocalyptic interest as in the preceding passage.

¹⁰⁵ Isaiah 15:1-16:14 ¹⁰⁶ Genesis 19:37

¹⁰⁷ Ruth 1:1

¹⁰⁸ George A. Barton, "Moab" in Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible.

¹⁰⁹ Isaiah 16:16

¹¹⁰ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 444-5.

Egypt will be weakened. A third enemy nation is Egypt.¹¹¹ Enmity against her is of long standing. Yahweh will stir up internal dissention so that Egyptian will fight against Egyptian until the land is destroyed. The government will be cruel and oppressive. The power of Yahweh will be seen in that he dries up the mighty Nile, causing widespread suffering. The princes become foolish and the warriors grow weak until Judah, in her strength, is a terror to them.¹¹²

Tyre will diminish. At an uncertain date from possibly 550 B. C. to 300¹¹³ some unknown writer composed a condemnation of Tyre and Sidon.¹¹⁴ For centuries Tyre had been a maritime commercial center. Baal worship had flourished there. In times of peace the city enjoyed an enviable prosperity, but at various times suffered at the hands of the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Greeks. This chapter must have been written when Tyre was suffering a decline.

The apocalyptic interest here centers in three ideas. The ancient proud city of Tyre will be brought low;¹¹⁵ this will come about through the design of Yahweh;¹¹⁶ and when the

¹¹¹ Isaiah 19:1-17

¹¹² Isaiah 19:17

¹¹³ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 447.

¹¹⁴ Isaiah 23:1-18

¹¹⁵ Isaiah 23:1-7

¹¹⁶ Isaiah 23:8-12

city is finally restored her wealth will be at the disposal of those who serve Yahweh.¹¹⁷

And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to Jehovah: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before Jehovah, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.¹¹⁸

This dream that Israel should finally enjoy the material benefits of Tyrian prosperity is an evidence that the coming age was thought of in terms of an earthly state of blessedness rather than a heavenly one.

3. The Apocalyptic in Haggai

The book of Haggai contains only two short chapters, but they give considerable information about conditions in Jerusalem some twenty years after the return of the exiles. The decree of Cyrus had been made in 538 B. C. Many Babylonian Jews returned to Jerusalem and started rebuilding the temple with great enthusiasm, but because of an unfortunate quarrel the work was discontinued.¹¹⁹

The temple must be rebuilt. Haggai appears late in the summer of 520 B. C., the second year of Darius, king of Persia,¹²⁰ to urge the immediate completion of the temple.

¹¹⁷ Isaiah 23:1-7

¹¹⁸ Isaiah 23:18

¹¹⁹ Ezra 4:24

¹²⁰ Haggai 1:1

city is finally restored the world will be at the disposal

of those who have taken it.

And let me mention one more thing which is of great importance. It shall not be assumed that this is a new discovery. It is a discovery which is for the benefit of the world, and for the benefit of the world.

This shows that the world is not a simple thing.

material benefits of human progress is an evidence that

the world is not a simple thing of its own of an earthly state

of knowledge rather than a merely one.

3. The world is in a state

The book of the world contains only two great chapters.

Let me give you a few words of advice about the world.

Remember that the world is not a simple thing.

The world of the world has been made in the world.

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Within four months he delivers as many effective addresses--- effective because they secure the desired results.¹²¹ Possibly he chooses a new moon festival about September 1 for the occasion of his first address and December 24, just after the winter solstice, for his concluding one.¹²²

The time has come for the people to build Yahweh's house. Even though they want to put off the work there can be no more delay.¹²³ While the temple foundation lies waste they already live in ceiled houses.¹²⁴ They must immediately go to the mountains for timber. They must work. Only thus will Yahweh be pleased.¹²⁵

This insistence of Haggai on the necessity of a temple is directly in line with Ezekiel. Haggai is neither a priest nor a dreamer, but he recognizes the fundamental importance of a place of worship. He supports the cult as the most effective means of securing the favor of Yahweh and the blessings of the new age. He makes no moral demands. These observations identify him as an eschatologist rather than a prophet.

¹²¹ The temple was completed in 516 B. C.

¹²² R. H. Kennett, "Haggai," Arthur S. Peake, editor, A Commentary on the Bible, p. 573.

¹²³ Haggai 1:2-3 ¹²⁴ Haggai 1:9

¹²⁵ Haggai 1:7

Prosperity will come. The people have worked hard, but they still are poor. They have planted, but their crops are failures. There is just one reason for this. Because of their neglect Yahweh has withheld rain and dew from grain field, vineyard, olive gove, and pasture land.¹²⁶ He also smote with hail, blasting, and mildew, but from the day when the people truly honor Yahweh he will bless them.¹²⁷ They must keep themselves clean from every contaminating influence. They must be holy in a ceremonial sense.¹²⁸

If not as religious magic, Haggai presents temple worship as the one most effective means of insuring material prosperity. Since Yahweh controls all the phenomena of nature, he naturally regulated the crops according to his will. Haggai believes that it is even more important to worship him properly than to till the soil.

Yahweh will shake the heavens. When the people do their part Yahweh will not delay in fulfilling his, for he is the same god who made a covenant with their fathers when they came out of Egypt.

For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah

126 Haggai 1:11

127 Haggai 2:17-19

128 Haggai 2:10-14

of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts.¹²⁹

It is difficult always to understand the literal implications of a passage like this. Does Haggai promise a supernatural display of Yahweh's power, or is he depending on the general unrest which was disturbing the empire of Darius at that time?¹³⁰ He promises that in shaking the heavens and the earth Yahweh will overcome the mighty warriors and "destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations."¹³¹

Doubtless he has both ideas in mind. The great kingdoms might fight against each other, but only Yahweh can determine the outcome so that Israel may be free. If the soil brings forth richly it is only because Yahweh governs the sun and the rain. If silver and gold pour into the temple it is an act of Yahweh, for they are his.

The kingdom will be reestablished. The government which Persia gave to Judah was a liberal one. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, of the Davidic line,¹³² was governor,¹³³ and Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, one of the Levites,¹³⁴ was

¹²⁹ Haggai 2:6-9

¹³⁰ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, p. 405.

¹³¹ Haggai 2:22

¹³² I Chronicles 3:17

¹³³ Haggai 1:12; 2:21, 3 ¹³⁴ I Chronicles 6:14

high priest. Zechariah had already mentioned Zerubbabel as the new king of Israel.¹³⁵ These two were called "Branches" who, crowned at the command of Yahweh, would carry out his will. It looked to the ardent patriots of that day that their messianic expectations were about to be fulfilled in the person of Zerubbabel.

In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith Jehovah, and will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith Jehovah of hosts.¹³⁶

These references to the choice of Yahweh, and to the royal signet which Zerubbabel should be or wear, indicate that Haggai anticipated that he would be the new king in Israel's restoration.¹³⁷ But Darius could tolerate no kings in his realm, even minor ones, and his police seem to have made a quick and quiet disposal of Zerubbabel. The failure of these messianic hopes doubtless brought great disappointment at the time in Jerusalem, but only delayed the day and intensified the confident expectations of a people who believed absolutely in the supremacy of their God.

¹³⁵ Zechariah 6:11 originally referred to Zerubbabel. Cf. ante, pp. 105-7.

¹³⁶ Haggai 2:23

¹³⁷ T. T. Perowne, Haggai and Zechariah (The Cambridge Bible for schools and colleges), p. 46.

4. The apocalyptic in Trito-Isaiah, 516-444 B. C.

The closing eleven chapters of the book of Isaiah, 56 to 66, are commonly known as Trito-Isaiah. They are made up of many sections, and may have been written by one or by several unnamed authors. There are no references to world events which might fix a date. The whole atmosphere of these chapters, however, suggests a period some years after the return from exile. There is mention of the altar,¹³⁸ of the sanctuary,¹³⁹ of the courts of holiness,¹⁴⁰ and of the fruit of the lips,¹⁴¹ which refers to thanksgiving in temple worship.¹⁴² Disregard for the sabbath,¹⁴³ improper observance of fasts,¹⁴⁴ and mention of the walls not being built¹⁴⁵ show that the reforms under Nehemiah had not yet come. Therefore, the date of Trito-Isaiah is usually placed between 516 and 444 B. C.

He reinterprets the prophetic message. Trito-Isaiah is partly prophet and partly apocalypticist. He reinterprets both streams of thought to meet the needs of a day when the

¹³⁸ Isaiah 60:7

¹³⁹ Isaiah 60:13

¹⁴⁰ Isaiah 62:9

¹⁴¹ Isaiah 57:19

¹⁴² W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, p. 283.

¹⁴³ Isaiah 58:13

¹⁴⁴ Isaiah 58:3

¹⁴⁵ Isaiah 58:2; 60:10

people are terribly discouraged by poverty,¹⁴⁶ pillaged crops,¹⁴⁷ and general disorder.¹⁴⁸ He tries to revive their spirits. He is familiar with Haggai and Zechariah.¹⁴⁹

He accepts the old prophetic principle that the people have sinned and merit Yahweh's wrath. They kill, lie, and conceive all manner of iniquity.¹⁵⁰ They pervert justice and turn away from their god.¹⁵¹ They have brought Yahweh's disfavor upon themselves.¹⁵² They sin greatly in not observing the sabbaths.¹⁵³

He believes, with Deutero-Isaiah, in the absolute supremacy and holiness of Yahweh.¹⁵⁴ Yahweh is an everlasting light,¹⁵⁵ the redeeming and everlasting Father,¹⁵⁶ and the potter who fashions the destinies of his people.¹⁵⁷ Idolatry and heathen abominations are evil because they disregard his supremacy.¹⁵⁸ Trito-Isaiah pleads for righteousness¹⁵⁹ and

¹⁴⁶ Isaiah 60:17

¹⁴⁷ Isaiah 62:8-9

¹⁴⁸ Isaiah 58:4; 60:18

¹⁴⁹ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 480-1.

¹⁵⁰ Isaiah 59:3-8

¹⁵¹ Isaiah 59:12-15; 63:10

¹⁵² Isaiah 59:1; 63:10

¹⁵³ Isaiah 56:2; 58:13

¹⁵⁴ Isaiah 57:15

¹⁵⁵ Isaiah 60:19-20

¹⁵⁶ Isaiah 63:15-18

¹⁵⁷ Isaiah 64:8

¹⁵⁸ Isaiah 65:1-7; 66:17

¹⁵⁹ Isaiah 58:6

a social gospel.¹⁶⁰ He even includes a suggestion of universalism.¹⁶¹ In all of these respects he is a prophet.

Evil will be punished. Trito-Isaiah believes with the prophets further that Yahweh will punish evil, but leans toward the apocalyptists in the harshness and exclusiveness of his doctrine. He discards any idea of sacrificial suffering. The wicked in Israel will be cursed and slaughtered before the righteous are restored.¹⁶² The Samaritans who think of erecting another temple and worshipping in a way displeasing to Yahweh will be put to shame.¹⁶³

Because the Edmoites have sinned Yahweh treads upon them in his anger as a workman in a winevat until his garments are stained red with their lifeblood.¹⁶⁴ The figure is a majestic and terrible one.

Yahweh is a warrior clad in armor who repays wrath to his adversaries, even the enemies of the coast-lands.¹⁶⁵ He brings kings and the pride of nations to naught.

Yahweh will display his power. The writer calls to mind the miraculous power of Yahweh when he delivered Israel in the days of Moses¹⁶⁶ and longs for a further demonstration.

¹⁶⁰ Isaiah 61:1-3

¹⁶¹ Isaiah 61:11; 62:2

¹⁶² Isaiah 65:15

¹⁶³ Isaiah 61:1-6

¹⁶⁴ Isaiah 63:1-6

¹⁶⁵ Isaiah 59:16-18

¹⁶⁶ Isaiah 63:1-14

O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence, as when fire kindleth the brushwood, and the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!¹⁶⁷

Yahweh's hand is not shortened.¹⁶⁸ He will repay his enemies according to their deeds until they fear him the world over.¹⁶⁹ He will fight with darkness¹⁷⁰ and with fire.

For, behold, Jehovah will come with fire, and his chariots shall be like the whirlwind; to render his anger with fierceness, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will Jehovah execute judgment, and by his sword, upon all flesh; and the slain of Jehovah shall be many.¹⁷¹

Trito-Isaiah is not as dependent upon supernatural intervention as are other writers, and some of these references reflect oriental imagery, but he is clearly influenced by apocalyptic patterns of thought.

Israel will enjoy privileges. In spite of Israel's sin she shall be redeemed by the gracious will of Yahweh. He has bestowed blessings and mercies upon her from of old.¹⁷² Now he will not rest until she is glorified in righteousness so that she becomes beautiful among the nations.¹⁷³ She will enjoy security and rest. She is like a young bride in whom her

¹⁶⁷ Isaiah 64:1-2

¹⁶⁸ Isaiah 59:1

¹⁶⁹ Isaiah 59:18-20

¹⁷⁰ Isaiah 60:2

¹⁷¹ Isaiah 66:15-6

¹⁷² Isaiah 63:7

¹⁷³ Isaiah 62

husband delights, and she shall be highly rewarded.

The wealth of many nations will come pouring into Jerusalem.¹⁷⁴ Rich caravans, the merchandise of the seas, precious metals, and much cattle will be given to Israel because Yahweh wishes it so.

And foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

.....
And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.¹⁷⁵

Strangers shall tend the flocks and foreigners shall till the soil, while the people of Israel are named as priests and ministers of Yahweh.¹⁷⁶ In the end his people shall all be righteous and inherit the land forever. Their numbers will be marvelously multiplied.¹⁷⁷

How different all this is from the message of the suffering servant! Israel is no longer a light to the Gentiles, but a people who will be favored above all others. Trito-Isaiah is sharing the dreams of the apocalyptists.

¹⁷⁴ Isaiah 60:4-14

¹⁷⁵ Isaiah 60:10-2, 14

¹⁷⁶ Isaiah 61:5-6

¹⁷⁷ Isaiah 60:19-22

Yahweh promises new heavens and a new earth. This conception is the climax of Trito-Isaiah's apocalyptic teaching.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying. There shall be no more hence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.¹⁷⁸

It is very clear that the new creation is to be an earthly one. There will be seed time and harvest, youth and old age, and all the comforts of a secure and prosperous society. There will be peace¹⁷⁹ and, above all, the worship of Yahweh.¹⁸⁰ The new heavens and the new earth will be an everlasting blessing.¹⁸¹

In the conception of new heavens there is no idea of immortality. That comes a little later. Just as the earth yields her increase so the heavens send sunshine and rain and withhold devastating storms. Creation is new because Yahweh is in it, but it is physical and temporal.

¹⁷⁸ Isaiah 65:17-21

¹⁷⁹ Isaiah 65:25

¹⁸⁰ Isaiah 66:23

¹⁸¹ Isaiah 66:22

5. Joel, 400-350 B. C.

The little book of Joel is the first complete Old Testament apocalypse. Gressmann goes so far as to say that the author is not a prophet at all.¹⁸²

Two critical problems bear on date and unity. The older commentators held that the book was written in the days of the first great prophets, but scholarship since 1875 has swung gradually to the position that it was late, possibly between 400 and 350 B. C.¹⁸³ Either many of the other prophets borrowed ideas and expressions from Joel or he borrowed from them¹⁸⁴ The latter seems more likely. Mention of temple offerings,¹⁸⁵ fasting,¹⁸⁶ a solemn assembly,¹⁸⁷ and the city wall,¹⁸⁸ and the use of some late vocabulary¹⁸⁹ all point away from early composition. It seems likely that the rich eschatology of the book is in part a development of previous thinking.

¹⁸² Hugo Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 93.

¹⁸³ George A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, pp. 373-4.

¹⁸⁴ S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, pp. 312-3.

¹⁸⁵ Joel 1:13

¹⁸⁶ Joel 1:14

¹⁸⁷ Joel 2:15

¹⁸⁸ Joel 2:9

¹⁸⁹ George Buchanan Gray, A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 208.

Scholars have speculated over whether or not the two parts of the book were written by the same person. There is no good reason for believing that they were not.¹⁹⁰ As in some other cases, the book is more readily understandable when treated as a whole.

The inspiration for the apocalypse of Joel came from a dreadful plague of locusts. These insect scourges were fairly common in ancient times, and have been observed on several occasions in recent years. Travelers in Persia and Palestine have brought back vivid accounts of what the locusts are like.

About the middle of April the hedges and ridges of the fields began to swarm with young locusts, which then wore a black appearance, had no wings, and were quite harmless. About the middle of May they had increased triple the size, were of a grey cindery colour, and had incipient wings about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch long. They still continued to be harmless. About the middle of June they had grown to their full size, which was $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; the legs, head, and extremities red; the body a pale colour, tending to red. They appear to be created for a scourge, since to strength incredible for so small a creature, they add saw-like teeth, admirably calculated to destroy herbage. . . . It was during their stay that they showed themselves to be the red plague described in Exodus. They seemed to march in regular battalions, crawling over everything that lay in their passage, in one straight front. They entered the inmost recesses of the houses, were found in every corner, stuck to our clothes, and infested our food.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Julius A. Bewer, The Literature of the Old Testament, pp. 396-7.

¹⁹¹ S. R. Driver, Joel and Amos (The Cambridge Bible), pp. 88-9.

Early in the spring the locusts appeared in considerable numbers along the sea-coast, and on the lower spurs of the Lebanon-range. They did no great injury at the time, and, having laid their eggs, immediately disappeared. Toward the end of May we heard that thousands of young locusts were on their march up the valley towards our village (Abeih): we accordingly went to meet them, hoping to stop their progress, or at least to turn aside their line of march. The endeavor was useless. I had often passed through clouds of flying locusts; but these we now confronted were without wings and about the size of full-grown grasshoppers, which they closely resembled in appearance and behaviour. But their number was astonishing: the whole face of the mountain was black with them. On they came like a disciplined army. We dug trenches and kindled fires, and beat and burnt heaps upon heaps, but the effort was utterly useless. They charged up the mountain side, and climbed over rocks, walls, ditches, and hedges, those behind coming up and passing over the masses already killed. . . . For some days they continued to pass towards the east, until finally only a few stragglers of the mighty hosts were left behind. . . . Whilst on the march they consumed every green thing with wonderful eagerness and expedition. . . . The noise made by them in marching and foraging was like that of a heavy shower falling upon a distant forest.¹⁹²

Joel's account of the terrifying locust plague which he saw is no less vivid than these descriptions, but is phrased in more picturesque language.

The locusts are like a mighty nation, strong and innumerable. Their teeth are like the teeth of a lion to devour the leaf and bark of every tree, leaving the branches

¹⁹² S. R. Driver, Joel and Amos (The Cambridge Bible, p. 89. For other accounts of locust plagues see G.A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, pp. 390-5.

bare like white picked bones.¹⁹³ The husbandmen and the vinedressers are helpless before the curse. The fruit of their labors is taken away. No more can offerings be made in the temple, because there is nothing to bring. The people can only fast and cry in desperation to Yahweh.¹⁹⁴ Even the beasts groan in perplexity and anguish because their pasture is taken away.¹⁹⁵

There is no stopping the army of locusts. On, on, they come like war horses in battle array drawing their clattering chariots. They leap from mountain top to mountain top, swarming against their prey in a military formation which cannot be broken. They scale the city wall. They force their way into the houses through every crevice. They make the earth to shake and the heavens to tremble. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine.¹⁹⁶

The day of Yahweh is coming. The originality of the apocalyptist is seen in the fact that he associates this devastating locust plague with the great and terrible day of Yahweh. Joel's greatest theological contribution, says McFadyen, lies in his clear presentation of what that day

¹⁹³ Joel 1:5-7

¹⁹⁴ Joel 1:10-5

¹⁹⁵ Joel 1:18-20

¹⁹⁶ Joel 2:4-11

means.¹⁹⁷ Herein are the essential elements of the messianic hope as it was expressed in post-exilic times---the outpouring of the spirit, the judgment of the heathen, the transformation of the land, and the glorification of Jerusalem as the permanent abode of Yahweh.

Joel makes five references to "the day." As Amos had said, it is a time to be dreaded. Alas! Alas! For the Almighty brings destruction.¹⁹⁸ Let the trumpet be sounded throughout Jerusalem in dread alarm. Let all the people tremble because the day of thick darkness is near.¹⁹⁹ This is Yahweh's day, and he is in command. He marshalls his forces so that they are invincible.²⁰⁰ His approach will be accompanied by a great upheaval of the natural world.

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh.²⁰¹

Only those who call upon the name of Yahweh can possibly be delivered,²⁰² and great numbers of his enemies await the dreadful day.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ John Edgar McFadyen, An Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 184.

¹⁹⁸ Joel 2:15

¹⁹⁹ Joel 2:1

²⁰⁰ Joel 2:11

²⁰¹ Joel 3:30-1

²⁰² Joel 2:32

²⁰³ Joel 3:14

The terrible locusts are the instruments of Yahweh's wrath, just as are the heathen armies in the minds of other writers, but they are only a suggestion of the terrors which shall prevail when Yahweh himself appears.

The people must repent. The repentance of which Joel speaks is not so much the righting of moral wrongs as it is the carrying out of mourning ceremonies. The drunkards must waken and weep, not because they are drunkards, but because their wine is taken away.²⁰⁴ The people must mourn as a young bride bereft of her husband because the meal and drink offerings have to be discontinued in the temple.²⁰⁵ The priests and the keepers of the sanctuary must gird themselves in sackcloth and pass the night in wailing.²⁰⁶ This is the only way of escape, and it may bring the desired result.

Yet even now, saith Jehovah, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meal-offering and a drink-offering unto Jehovah your God?²⁰⁷

Yahweh will bless Israel. Here is the promise of new heavens and a new earth phrased in other terms. Yahweh

204 Joel 1:5

205 Joel 1:8-9

206 Joel 1:13

207 Joel 2:12-4

will pity his people and renew the soil of the earth so that grain, wine, and oil will be given in greater abundance.²⁰⁸ The beasts need no longer fear, for plentiful rains will freshen the pasture. All the land may rejoice because the former and the latter rains will come down "in just measure."²⁰⁹ The wine vats and the granaries will actually overflow.

The greatest evidence of Yahweh's favor, however will be in the outpouring of his spirit.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. . . . And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant whom Jehovah doth call.²¹⁰

This passage has been regarded as the "high-water mark of apocalyptic prophecy."²¹¹ The darkness, the fire, and the storm are only the instruments of Yahweh, not himself; but the spirit which he bestows is a part of himself. When the people receive it they are renewed and made worthy to receive the benefits of the new age. This conception is the

²⁰⁸ Joel 2:18-9

²⁰⁹ Joel 2:21-3

²¹⁰ Joel 2:28-9, 32

²¹¹ R. F. Horton, The Minor Prophets (The Century Bible), pp. 83-4.

apocalyptic counterpart to Jeremiah's promise of the new covenant and Ezekiel's doctrine of the heart of flesh.

The nations will be judged. Yahweh will bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem and gather all of the nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat for judgment.²¹² The name means "Yahweh judges" or "Yahweh has judged."²¹³ Here it suggests no geographical location, but only Yahweh's determination to render justice. The place is also called "the valley of decision."²¹⁴

The idea of a judgment of the nations had been developing over a long period. The trend of apocalyptic thinking since Ezekiel had been to picture the final judgment of the nations in the face of Jerusalem. Evidently there were some who wanted to identify the place. For this reason the valley of the Kidron and the slopes of Olivet have been called Jehoshaphat.²¹⁵

So the nations must come, but the court has already decided against them.

²¹² Joel 3:1-3

²¹³ Julius A. Bewer, Obadiah and Joel (I. C. C.), p. 127.

²¹⁴ Joel 3:14

²¹⁵ G. A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, p. 422.

I will gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.²¹⁶

Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia, which mean nothing to Yahweh, have no standing whatsoever, for they have stolen, plundered, and profited by the miseries of Israel. Their guilt will be upon their own heads. Their children shall be sold into bondage.²¹⁷ Egypt and Edom, old enemies of Israel, will be made desolage. None at all are to be spared, for Yahweh will sit in judgment over "all the nations round about."²¹⁸

A call to holy war is sounded. Plowshares beaten into swords and pruning hooks into spears will arm those who accompany the prisoner nations.²¹⁹ The figure changes and the great day is described as a time of harvest when the people swing their sickles among the wicked or tread them down in the winepress until the vats overflow with their blood.²²⁰ Meanwhile, Yahweh will roar out of Zion, causing the heavens and the earth to shake.²²¹

²¹⁶ Joel 3:2-3

²¹⁷ Joel 3:4-8

²¹⁸ Joel 3:12b

²¹⁹ Joel 3:10-12

²²⁰ Joel 3:13

²²¹ Joel 3:16

The idea that the enemies of Israel must be heartlessly punished is characteristic of apocalyptic. Vengeance is often more to be desired than justice or mercy.

Israel will be secure. The final paragraph of the book is a reiteration of extravagant apocalyptic expectations. Yahweh will be a refuge to his people and prevent any foreigner from entering the holy city. The land will flow with milk, water, and sweet wine. The temple will be a blessing to Israel. The enemy nations will be in desolation. Judah will be established forever. Yahweh will cleanse her and make his dwelling in Zion.²²²

After all allowances for eastern imagery are made, the selfish and nationalistic expectations which Joel encourages are unmistakable.

6. The apocalyptic in Micah 4-7, 500-200 B. C.

Chapters 4 to 7 of Micah are generally considered post-exilic,²²³ and may have been written almost any time between 500 and 200 B. C. There seems to be a natural division between chapters 5 and 6. Like Trito-Isaiah, this part of Micah is a mixture of prophecy and apocalypse.

²²² Joel 3:16b-18

²²³ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 593.

The points of prophetic interest are easily recognizable. Yahweh is a god of righteousness²²⁴ who tries to draw his people by lovingkindness as much as by punishment. The sins of the people are thoroughly condemned. They grow rich by giving short measure, then cherish their ill gotten gains. They are filled with violence and lies.²²⁵ They stain their hands with the blood of their brothers. No one of them is righteous, and the best one is evil.²²⁶ Even heathen abominations²²⁷ and Baal worship²²⁸ are found in the land.

The writer feels the old prophetic abhorrence of meaningless ritual. He rejects sacrifices of animals, oil, and infants.²²⁹ In one of the most beautiful verses in all the Old Testament he defines true religion.

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?²³⁰

Thus far the post-exilic Micah is a prophet. Practically all of these ideas come from the last two chapters, which are recognized as bearing considerable resemblance to the original part of the book.²³¹ Chapters 4

224 Micah 7:9

225 Micah 6:9-12

226 Micah 7:2-4

227 Micah 5:10-5

228 Micah 6:16

229 Micah 6:16

230 Micah 6:8

231 John Edgar McFadyen, An Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 203.

and 5 are much more apocalyptic in tone.

Israel will be purged. Israel has sinned grievously, but her cleansing will come through the decisive acts of Yahweh rather than through repentance.²³² He will take away all horses and chariots out of their land so that the people may depend upon him only in battle. For the same reason, he will overthrow the city strongholds. He and he alone will be their protection. Witchcraft, soothsaying, images, and pillars must go, for the wrath of Yahweh will destroy every thing which dishonors him.

The people must trust neither in their own strength nor in rival powers. Their faith is to be fixed in Yahweh alone if they wish to merit his favor.

Zion is to be established. Zion shall finally become the highest of mountains. The people of many nations shall seek Yahweh there in order to learn of his ways and walk in them.

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.²³³

²³² Micah 5:10-5

²³³ Micah 4:2b-3

In the atmosphere of peace all fear shall be taken away and every man shall sit contentedly under his own vine and fig tree.²³⁴ Here is a mixture of apocalyptic ideology and prophetic universalism. The glories of Zion do not spring directly from prophecy.

The remnant flourishes. Even after the return under Cyrus there were many Jews of the dispersion. Considerable numbers remained in Babylon. Others were in Egypt and various countries. It was a dream of the apocalyptists that they all be returned to Palestine.

Micah promises that the remnant of Israel shall be gathered as a mighty flock in the midst of their pasture.²³⁵ They shall come back to their own people.²³⁶ The lame and the weakened remnant will become a strong nation again with Yahweh as their eternal ruler.²³⁷ They shall come when the messiah appears and be both a delight and a scourge.

And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew from Jehovah, as showers upon the grass, that tarry not nor man, nor wait for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who if he go through, treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and there is none to deliver. Let thy hand be lifted up above thine adversaries, and let all thine enemies be cut off.²³⁸

²³⁴ Micah 4:4

²³⁵ Micah 2:12

²³⁶ Micah 5:3

²³⁷ Micah 4:7

²³⁸ Micah 5:7-9

This is a strange combination of qualities. The avenging power of the remnant is a new idea.

The messiah comes. Micah also presents a new portrait of the messiah as an individual leader of the common man.²³⁹ He comes from Bethlehem of the clan of Ephrathah, one of the many villages of Judah. Such a background would appeal to ordinary Israelites.

A Savior, who was one of themselves, not born up in the capital, foster brother to the nobles who oppressed them, but born among the people, sharer of their toils and their wrongs!---this would bring hope to every heart among the disinherited poor of Israel.²⁴⁰

He will be a man of peace, rather than a man of war. He will serve the people---"feed the flock." With all of his interests in immediate human affairs there is still an eternal quality about him, as God is eternal. His goings forth are "from of old, from everlasting." The strength and majesty of Yahweh, his god, shall be within him. Thus endowed he will be able to overcome the threat of every foreign enemy. The picture is a noble one.

Israel shall triumph. Israel is to be favored because Yahweh will judge between the strong nations and in her behalf.²⁴¹ Israel is like a woman in travail who is an easy

²³⁹ Micah 5:2-6

²⁴⁰ George A. Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. I. pp. 444-5.

²⁴¹ Micah 4:3

victim of an enemy.²⁴² These nations do not understand the ways of Yahweh, for he will gather them as sheaves to the threshing floor. The long awaited opportunity of Israel is near.

Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.²⁴³

Such a dream of power, made possible by the powerful intervention of Yahweh, is completely apocalyptic. As time goes on some of the hopes of Israel become more and more extravagant.

7. Historical interlude---The Rise of the Greeks

Alexander the Great, son of the Macedonian king, Philip II, ascended the throne of his murdered father in 336 B. C. at the age of twenty. He had been a student of Aristotle who gave him instruction in philosophy, science, medicine, and the affairs of government. Within one year he had acquired Thessaly in Greece, and by another he was reaching out along the Danube. He was so prompt and severe in quelling insurrection in Thebes that every Greek state

²⁴² Micah 4:10

²⁴³ Micah 4:13-5:1

readily submitted to him.

Having made careful preparations he soon set out across the Dardanelles with an army of about 25,000. By courage and clever maneuvering he decisively defeated the Persians at Issus in 333 B. C., gaining the western half of their empire. Phoenicia, Palestine, and Egypt fell quickly into his hand. Then came babylon, Indian, and the east, which completed his conquest of the Persian empire. At the height of his power, in June 323 B. C., Alexander the Great died. He was only thirty-two, and had reigned for twelve years and eight months.

The ruling power of Alexander's great empire was contested by four of his generals---Antigonus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, and Seleucus. Ptolemy and Seleucus, the two strongest ones, expanded their smaller empires from Egypt and Syria, respectively. Wars and rebellions followed with dizzy succession, while Palestine crouched for safety between the two growing giants. Ptolemy seized Jerusalem on a sabbath day in 320 B. C. when the people would not fight. He took captive Jews to Alexandria, and others went voluntarily to settle in Egypt. For the most part, the Jews were favorable to Egyptian rule, since they were allowed considerable freedom and their own high priest.

Palestine was under the control of the Seleucidae (Syria) in 295 B. C. and in 219 B. C. Antiochus III,

commonly known as Antiochus the Great, ruled from 223 to 187 B. C. In 218 B. C. the Jews felt strong enough to rebel, and from that time until 198 B. C., when Antiochus won a great victory at Paneas on the Jordan, there was violent warfare in Palestine.

The Seleucidae were much more ardent Hellenizers than the Ptolemies, and for that reason the Jews resisted them. Alexander had endeavored to inspire all of his generals with the idea that the most effective means of keeping control of his conquests was to establish Greek culture. The gymnasium, the theatre, the language, the law, the literature, the arts, and the religion of Greece, as well as new political forms, were sponsored in a zealous effort to spread the spirit of Hellas. New cities were built and others remodeled according to Greek conceptions of architecture, business, and everyday life. This Hellenizing influence was felt all through Palestine and particularly along the Mediterranean. In the minds of thoughtful Jews it was more to be feared than bondage. They resisted it desperately, but many others embraced it as the new spirit of the age. Working from without and from within it almost disrupted Judaism.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ For a fuller account of this period see G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, pp. 1-29.

8. Zechariah 9-14. 218 B. C. The Low Ebb of Prophecy

The first eight chapters of Zechariah were undoubtedly written from 520 to 518 B. C. by the prophet whose name they bear.²⁴⁵ Zechariah, the son of Iddo, was a contemporary of Haggai and deeply concerned with the restoration of the temple and its worship and with the strengthening of the Jewish national life by peaceful means at a time when the power of Persia was an uncertain element.

Although older tradition accepted the supposition that the entire book of Zechariah was written by the same author, present day scholarship is unanimous in holding that the last six chapters are by an entirely different hand.²⁴⁶

A number of strong considerations support this view. Zechariah 9 begins in an altogether new literary vein. The first word, שָׁמַח , which means "burden" or "utterance" from שָׁמַח , "to lift up," suggests a separate oracle. Chapter 12 also begins with שָׁמַח , showing a relationship to the preceding section.²⁴⁷ In Zechariah proper there is frequent mention of

²⁴⁵ S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of Old Testament, p. 344.

²⁴⁶ George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, pp. 439-42.

²⁴⁷ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 218.

Jerusalem, but here she is scarcely alluded to. There references to fixed dates are found; but here there is no information about dates or definite people. Zechariah himself employs visions to emphasize his message; but this writer uses no such device. The first chapters are straightforward prose; but these, for the most part, are in unusual poetic form. Vocabulary differences make it seem unlikely that the same author could have written the two sections. Zechariah reflects the age of Haggai when the temple was being built; but chapters 9 to 14 move in an entirely different sphere, making specific mention of the Greeks. The earlier section represents God as hidden from the sight of men; but this later one looks for the apocalyptic revelation of Yahweh coming in power. Zechariah is a prophet who stresses morals and human endeavor, while this unknown writer is an apocalypticist.

Although the date of Zechariah 9 to 12 cannot be fixed with certainty, the common conclusion is that it is post-exilic.²⁴⁸ Some scholars place it in the days of Alexander, and some during the Maccabean struggle. The six chapters were probably composed by different authors and at

²⁴⁸ George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, p. 443.

different times within the Greek period.²⁴⁹

Israel's enemies will be mercilessly destroyed. The apocalyptic section opens with an enumeration of various enemy neighbors of Israel, accompanied by dire threats of punishment which shall fall upon them.²⁵⁰ Apparently their great sin had been to embrace the Greek culture.

According to the historical record, Tyre was conquered by Alexander in 332 B. C. Possibly this event, or the prospect of it, gave the writer his inspiration.²⁵¹ One Philistine city shall fall in anguish, another be put to shame, another lose her king, another be wiped out, while Ashdod will be peopled by a degenerate mongrel race. Yahweh will remove their abominations "from between the teeth" of the Philistines. This probably refers to what the Jews regarded as unclean food or as unsuitable sacrifices like dogs, mice, and swine. They shall no longer be allowed to eat blood. At last, Yahweh will be as a garrison encamped around his own people to prevent rival expeditions of war from crossing their borders as they had done so many times in the past.

²⁴⁹ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), pp. 258-9.

²⁵⁰ Zechariah 9:1-8

²⁵¹ Mitchell, op. cit. p. 258 and S. R. Driver, Minor Prophets (Century Bible), Vol. II, p. 237.

Yahweh, who has seen the misery of his people "with his own eyes," will guarantee them peace.

One of the misfortunes of Palestine was that it lay between Egypt and Syria on the crossroads of the world. The faith of Judah was doubtless strengthened by the fact that Alexander the Great did not finally come to Jerusalem as he had planned.

The cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan, symbolizing the Greek powers,²⁵² will be cut down.²⁵³ Foreign leadership will be destroyed.

The unfortunate people of Israel are called the "flock of slaughter" who have been maliciously exploited by their foreign oppressors.²⁵⁴ Unprincipled men have grown rich from the flesh and blood of their victims. This passage cannot be dated with certainty, but the covetous shepherd may well refer to Ptolemy III of Egypt.²⁵⁵

So in parabolic fashion the apocalyptist fattens the miserable sheep for slaughter.²⁵⁶ He takes *niḥpān*, "staves," such as shepherds would use in herding their flocks. The

²⁵² G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, pp. 93-4.

²⁵³ Zechariah 11:1-3

²⁵⁴ Zechariah 11:4

²⁵⁵ Mitchell, op. cit., p. 303.

²⁵⁶ Zechariah 11:4

first one he calls *דְּיוֹ*, "sweetness," "beauty," "grace," "splendor," or "favor." It signifies the regard which a true shepherd should have for his flock. The second is *חֲבִלִים*, "bands," or "bonds," from a root which means "to tighten a cord," "twist," or "bind." There should be unity rather than division in Israel.

The doomed sheep are to be fed no longer.²⁵⁷ Let them die at once, since they are to perish anyway. The first staff is broken to signify despair, and the selfish shepherd asks for his wages.

The way is thus prepared for a dramatic change. The people who have suffered so much will overwhelm their enemies with a vengeance which arises out of eternal justice. If Israel had not suffered the evil oppressors would not need to be destroyed.

Filled with weariness and loathing, the writer acts for Yahweh to cut off three shepherds in one month. These three rulers were doubtless perfectly clear to the contemporary reader, but they cannot now be identified with certainty.

A new shepherd will be raised up who will heal and feed the flock. He will not be cut off.²⁵⁸ Possibly this

²⁵⁷ Zechariah 11:9

²⁵⁸ Zechariah 11:15-16

refers to Judas Maccabeas. Jerusalem will be strong in the face of her enemies through the power of Yahweh, the great creator. She will be like a poisonous drink and a heavy burden to her evil neighbors. Yahweh will make her victorious after striking the earth with terror.

In that day will I make the chieftain of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem.²⁵⁹

The anger of Yahweh is kindled beyond endurance against the oppressors of Judah whom he calls shepherds and he-goats.²⁶⁰ He will strengthen Judah in battle as a mighty horse of war. From Yahweh himself shall come forth the "cornerstone," the "nail," and the "battle-bow." It has been suggested that the first may refer to Simon, the second to Judas, and the third to Jonathan.²⁶¹ If so, they represent Israel's most dynamic and constructive leaders within the whole period. They are absolutely invincible because Yahweh is with them.

And they shall be as mighty men, treading down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight, because Jehovah is with them; and the riders on horses shall be confounded.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Zechariah 12:6

²⁶⁰ Zechariah 10:3

²⁶¹ This is by no means certain. If, as Pfeiffer holds, the book was not written before 200 B. C., it could include no reference to the Maccabean rebellion, and this passage refers to other leaders. See Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 612.

²⁶² Zechariah 10:5

Jerusalem will endure in the midst of terror. After a terrific battle in which near defeat is turned into victory, the Holy City shall be saved.²⁶³ In the day of Yahweh, which recalls Ezekiel's vision concerning God,²⁶⁴ the nations will come against Jerusalem to divide the spoil. They will take the city, ravish the women, and carry half of the people away into captivity. When the cause seems absolutely hopeless Yahweh will come forth in true apocalyptic fashion and fight for his people. In themselves they are helpless; deliverance must come through divine intervention alone. Yahweh, a creature of immense proportions, will plant his feet on the Mount of Olives, a high ridge which overlooks Jerusalem on the eastern side and shuts out all avenues of escape in that direction. His power will break the mountain asunder, forcing one part to the north and the other to the south, thus fashioning a valley by which a remnant of the people may flee to safety, even as they escaped in the day of the great earthquake.

Yahweh will gather his scattered people. Yahweh will restore Judah and Joseph in mercy and bring them back as though he had not cast them off.²⁶⁵ He will פּוֹשֵׁט , "hiss,"

²⁶³ Zechariah 14:1-5

²⁶⁴ Ezekiel 38

²⁶⁵ Zechariah 10:6

"whistle," or "call by a whistle" for them, and they whom he has redeemed will be as numerous as they once were.²⁶⁶ He will

לַיִן, "scatter," "disperse," or "sow" them among the nations. Smith believes that the Hebrew verb should be pointed to change the future tense to the perfect so that the verse would read, "I have sown."²⁶⁷ Mitchell agrees.²⁶⁸ This emendation makes the verse more meaningful, since return, rather than further scattering, was Israel's hope at that time.

Out of Egypt and out of Assyria they shall flock in such numbers that room can scarcely be found for them in Gilead and in Lebanon. Assyria, although long since fallen with the destruction of Nineveh, is here used to designate the existing world power. Gilead and Lebanon refer to the entire region east of the Jordan which the Hebrews regarded as rightfully their own.

The subject of Zechariah 10:11 is uncertain. As the text now stands it reads, וְיַעֲבֹד בְּיָם יָם, "and he shall pass through the sea of affliction." Possibly it should be emended to read, "and they shall pass through the

²⁶⁶ Zechariah 10:8-10

²⁶⁷ George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, p. 462.

²⁶⁸ Hinckley G. Mitchell, Haggai and Zechariah (I. C. C.), p. 292.

sea of Egypt." In either case the reference is to Yahweh's miraculous deliverance of his people at the time of the Red Sea Crossing. The sea of waves shall be troubled, the mighty Nile dried up, and the rule of Assyria and Egypt brought low. Then the strengthened ones may walk up and down the land in the name of their god, as the Septuagint suggests.²⁶⁹

The messianic kingdom will be established. The new age will be ushered in by the coming of the ideal ruler, whose character is described in familiar phrases.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.²⁷⁰

When the enemies are destroyed, Jerusalem preserved, and the remnant brought back home, then will be realized the glories which the people have so long anticipated. They shall be cleansed from every impurity and every inclination to worship idols.²⁷¹ The land shall be restored by living waters which flow out of Jerusalem, and the climate shall

²⁶⁹ G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, p. 93.

²⁷⁰ Zechariah 9:9-10

²⁷¹ Zechariah 13:1-2

be tempered in both summer and winter.²⁷² Yahweh will rule over all the earth, and he will smite with dreadful plague any who turn against him.²⁷³ Jerusalem will become a city of blessedness to which not only the people of Israel may turn, but where the few remaining out of the enemy nations shall learn to worship Yahweh.²⁷⁴ Everything in connection with the temple worship will be holy.

Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts.²⁷⁵

Prophecy will be punished with death. There is a fundamental clash between prophecy and apocalypse, and there is no passage in the Old Testament where this is demonstrated more clearly than in the book of Zechariah.

And it shall come to pass when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been a bondman from my youth.²⁷⁶

Smith insists that in Zechariah 9 to 14 prophecy is

²⁷² Zechariah 14:8

²⁷³ Zechariah 14:9, 12

²⁷⁴ Zechariah 14:16

²⁷⁵ Zechariah 14:20-1

²⁷⁶ Zechariah 13:3-5

seen "at its lowest ebb."²⁷⁷ There is a terrible thirst for revenge; there are evidences of schism and intrigue; there are false hopes; and finally, a denial or neglect of much that the great prophets had taught. The book assumes increased significance when it is regarded not as prophecy at all, but as apocalypse. The people are encouraged to entertain the fondest hopes in days of extreme difficulty and to observe the temple ritual in order to realize them. Any means of worship other than the accepted ones are as evil as idolatry. The writer is perfectly consistent, from his point of view, when he declares that anyone who ventures to prophesy must be put to death.

The book of Daniel is the only perfect example of apocalyptic literature in the Old Testament. Zechariah 9 to 14 is so far from prophecy and so near to apocalypse that in most respects it belongs to the latter class. In some ways it even out-Daniels Daniel.

9. Isaiah 24-27

These four chapters are commonly recognized as being post-exilic, and therefore from a hand much later than

²⁷⁷ George Adam Smith, The Book of the Twelve Prophets, Vol. II, p. 435..

Isaiah's.²⁷⁸ They contain no reference which connects them in any way with Isaiah's life; their literary style is not Isaiah's; and the general ideas which they contain seem to come from a different age. Any exact date is difficult to conjecture.

Although these chapters reveal the unmistakable marks of apocalypse, they express much less bitterness than Zechariah 9 to 14. They were evidently written by someone with a kindly nature who possessed a deeply devotional spirit. They demonstrate that apocalyptic need not necessarily be filled with hatred.

Yahweh will be exalted. The writer begins by recognizing the emptiness of the earth, although he does not go as far as the author of Ecclesiastes in saying that everything is vanity. Priest and people, servant and master, mistress and maid, creditor and debtor---as a matter of fact, all classes of people---have fallen short of what was expected of them. For this reason great evils have come.

The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 221.

²⁷⁹ Isaiah 24:5-6

In place of music there is mourning. In place of cities²⁸⁰ the land lies desolate.²⁸¹ Wailing and fear, pits and snares torment mankind. The earth is going to pieces. It staggers and sways like a drunken man and shall not be able to rise after its fall.

Over against the pitiable condition of the world is the greatness of Israel's God. His praise is sung in some unusually beautiful passages. Because of the majesty of Yahweh the people from east and west and from the uttermost parts of the earth must lift up their voices in shouts and joyous songs. "Glory to the righteous."²⁸²

O Jehovah, thou art good; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name, for thou hast done wonderful things.²⁸³

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.²⁸⁴

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee.²⁸⁵

Some say that these passages are later insertions, while others feel that they are a part of the apocalyptic's

²⁸⁰ The "waste city" may refer to Nineveh, Babylon, Susa, or Jerusalem. See George B. Gray, The Book of Isaiah (I. C. C.), Vol. I, pp. 412-3.

²⁸¹ Isaiah 24:19

²⁸² Isaiah 24:16b

²⁸³ Isaiah 25:1

²⁸⁴ Isaiah 25:9

²⁸⁵ Isaiah 26:3

own thought.²⁸⁶ They seem effectively to emphasize the idea that in comparison with the evils of the world God is good.

He will judge the nations. Since the writer is so much of an apocalyptist, he cannot ignore this doctrine. Yahweh will slay the inhabitants of the earth because they are sinful.²⁸⁷ Even though many may not yet see, his hand is lifted up with fire to devour his adversaries.²⁸⁸ The Moabites will be trampled into the ground like straw.²⁸⁹ The great ones of heaven and earth cannot hope to escape.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered into a pit; and shall be shut up in prison; and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; and before his elders shall be glory.²⁹⁰

In that day Yahweh will take his strong sword in hand to punish "the swift serpent," "the crooked serpent," and "the monster that is in the sea."²⁹¹ These may refer to enemy

²⁸⁶ Compare W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament, p. 235 and Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 443.

²⁸⁷ Isaiah 26:21

²⁸⁸ Isaiah 26:11

²⁸⁹ Isaiah 25:10

²⁹⁰ Isaiah 24:21-3

²⁹¹ Isaiah 27:1

nations such as Egypt and Syria or to individual kings. Whatever their identification, the judgment of Yahweh is sure.

Israel will be restored. No apocalypse is complete without a promise of restoration. Yahweh will gather his people from the lands of Egypt and Assyria. They are almost ready to perish. A great trumpet will be blown and the outcasts will return and worship Yahweh "in the holy mountain in Jerusalem"²⁹²

There will be a messianic feast. The kindly spirit of the writer is shown in his conception of a great feast which not only Israel, but all the nations, may enjoy.²⁹³ He seems to feel that after the whole earth is transformed all those who honor Yahweh may partake of the good things which he provides. There will be a great spread of fat and succulent dainties with marrow and well refined wine.

The universalism of the writer equals, or even surpasses anything in Deutero-Isaiah, and furnishes a notable exception to the general exclusive trend of apocalyptic thought.

The righteous are immortal. There is no question about the death of the evil oppressors. They are dead and

²⁹² Isaiah 27:12-3

²⁹³ Isaiah 25:6-7

shall remain so, for Yahweh has destroyed them. They are entirely forgotten.²⁹⁴ But Israel, out of her painful travail, shall bring forth life.

Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of the herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead.²⁹⁵

He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth, for Jehovah hath spoken it.²⁹⁶

This last quotation concludes the passage which describes the messianic feast. Are the people of other lands to have any part in the resurrection? Probably not, or some mention would have been made of the provision. "Thy dead" are to live, and "my dead bodies" are to live. These seem to apply to Israel. The conception of a universal resurrection is later still. It is obvious that the resurrection alluded to here is a physical one and that the mundane sphere is to be the realm of their dwelling. There is no idea of a heaven. Those conditions which have troubled Israel Yahweh will "take away from off all the earth."

Like other religious principles the doctrine of the resurrection underwent a long process of development. That development was hastened by the trials which Israel faced.

²⁹⁴ Isaiah 26:14

²⁹⁵ Isaiah 26:19

²⁹⁶ Isaiah 25:8

10. Daniel. 165 B. C. Faithfulness under Persecution

For a hundred years Palestine had been ruled by Egypt until the Battle of Paneion, in 198 B. C., brought it under the control of the Seleucidae of Egypt. Many Jews welcomed the change, but they soon found their lot more burdensome. Antiochus III engaged in costly wars and levied heavy taxes. Seleucus IV, his successor, aroused the ire of Judaism by proposing to rob the temple. Heliodorus, the chief minister of Seleucus, murdered his superior and elevated a young son of Seleucus to the throne. After further violence a brother of Seleucus became king. Such was the political inheritance of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) when he came to the throne of Syria in 175 B. C.

Many of the Jews were anxious that their state be Hellenized in accord with the trend of the times.²⁹⁷ When Antiochus Epiphanes assumed power a group of "transgressors" out of Israel visited him with the request that he give them license to build "a place of exercise in Jerusalem according to the laws of the Gentiles."²⁹⁸ They were taking the initiative. They neglected circumcision, forsook the

²⁹⁷ W. O. E. Oesterley, A History of Israel, Vol. II, p. 217.

²⁹⁸ I Maccabees 1:11-5

covenant, joined the Gentiles, and "sold themselves to do evil."

Young Jews were wearing the headdress of Greek athletes and learning to throw the discus. Even the high priest was hurrying through his religious ceremonies in order that he might have official part in the games. Greek language, culture, dress, and habits of thoughts were filtering more and more into Judaism. There were some, of course, who welcomed the supposed advance, while others bitterly resented it.

A deplorable situation sprang out of the rivalry between Tobias and Onias. Under Egyptian rule the Tobiad house had enjoyed the tax-farming rights and exercised great economic powers. Onias, the high priest, welcomed a change to the Seleucid rule, thinking that he could strengthen his office and counteract Hellenism, which Tobias favored. Antiochus removed Onias and installed Jason in his place. Jason paid him well for the position. Menelaus offered a still larger price and became high priest. Fighting ensued. Antiochus came to Jerusalem, Plundered the temple, and put many of the faithful to death. In 168 B. C., chagrined by a rebuff from a Roman legate for attempting to invade Egypt, Antiochus IV turned his attention to the immediate task of creating order in Jerusalem.

Antiochus Epiphanes was an ardent Hellenizer, but it must be remembered that the Jews were divided against

themselves. The political, economic, and religious struggles were driving him nearly to distraction. Since some of the Jews were already clamoring for Greek ways, a vigorous campaign on his part seemed the best way out. Moreover, he must demonstrate his own right as king.

When once begun, Antiochus carried out his Hellenizing program in Palestine with the greatest of zeal. The people called him "Epimanes," which means "madman." He prohibited all Jewish sacrifices, feasts, and circumcision. He ordered that heathen altars be set up and unclean animals sacrificed in regular places of worship. An altar to the Olympian Zeus was erected in the midst of the great altar in Jerusalem, and on December 25, 168 B. C., swine flesh was burned upon it. Copies of the scriptures were destroyed. Many Jews were put to death. The eating of unclean food and the worship of Grecian idols were made the test of their loyalty.

Messengers were sent throughout the country carrying the official decrees. In the village of Modin a fearless priest and head of the Hasmonean house by the name of Mattathias stoutly declared:

We will not hearken to the king's words, to go aside from our worship, on the right hand, or on the left.²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ I Maccabees 2:22.

Thereupon he slew the king's emissary and a faithless Jew who was preparing to obey the royal command. The flashing sword of Mattathias fired the Maccabean rebellion which was so magnificently led by the sons of the ageing priest, notably Judas. Starting as guerilla warfare, it grew in intensity and effectiveness until just three years later, on December 25, 165 B. C., the temple was purified and rededicated.

These were the times during which the book of Daniel came into being.²⁸¹ A situation more filled with conflict and dramatic urgency could hardly be imagined. The Jews had suffered oppression before, but never had their faith been so threatened, from within, as well as from without.

Early commentators thought that the book of Daniel was written during the reign of Jehoiakim when the hero was carried away to Babylon with the other exiles.²⁸² Scholars now generally hold that it came from the Maccabean days described above. Reasons for the present view may be summarized as follows: (1) In the Hebrew canon Daniel is not placed among the "Prophets," but among the later "Writings." (2) The language of the book, both Hebrew and Aramaic, is late. (3) The use of Greek words indicates a

²⁸¹ For a fuller account of this period see G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, pp. 21-41.

²⁸² Daniel 1:1.

period after the exile. (4) The historical references touching the Greek era are much more accurate than those regarding earlier times. (5) The theological conceptions of the book reflect the thinking of the second and the first centuries B. C.

Yahweh delivers the faithful. The reader who opens the book of Daniel comes first upon a collection of six fascinating narratives, in as many chapters, which are designed to show how the God of the Hebrews always delivers those who are faithful to him. These stories were meant to strengthen the faith of those who were being persecuted during the terrifying days of Antiochus Epiphanes. They are told as though they took place soon after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C.

Daniel is one of four Hebrew youths who are introduced into the court of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, during the early days of the exile.²⁸³ Although they are already handsome young men, they are to be fed upon the king's dainties until they become still more presentable as servants in his court. They refuse to eat the food provided from the royal table, and insist on a vegetable diet. They soon are fairer and wiser than any others in the realm. This story encouraged

²⁸³ Daniel 1.

the Hebrews to follow their diet as prescribed by the law of Moses instead of eating unclean food when Antiochus Epiphanes kept insisting that they do so.

One night King Nebuchadnezzar has a troublesome dream, but in the morning cannot remember it.²⁸⁴ He summons the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans, declaring that, upon pain of death, they must recall to him the dream and interpret its meaning. This they cannot do. The king is about to take the lives of all of them when Daniel sends word that he can fulfill the royal demand. When he interprets the dream Nebuchadnezzar falls down in wonder and worship. Daniel is able to reveal all secrets because he is completely faithful. This lesson also is clear.

King Nebuchadnezzar makes a golden image of his god and decrees that at the sound of music all in the realm shall fall down and worship it.²⁸⁵ The three companions of Daniel refuse to do so, and are thrown into a fiery furnace. They escape unharmed.

The king has a dream of a great tree being cut down so that only the stump remains.²⁸⁶ Daniel, now chief of the magicians, interprets it to mean that Nebuchadnezzar will

284 Daniel 2.

285 Daniel 3.

286 Daniel 4.

be driven by temporary insanity to dwell with the beasts of the field until he learns to honor the true God. So it comes to pass.

Although there is no historical record of any such abnormality in the life of Nebuchadnezzar, the story is significant in view of the fact that Antiochus Epiphanes was in derision called "Epimanes," which means "mad."

King Belshazzar sees an inscription being written by a strange hand on the wall of his great banquet room.²⁸⁷ Daniel interprets the words to mean that his kingdom is to fall, just as the Jews hoped that the rule of Antiochus would fall. That night Belshazzar dies. Neither is there any historical foundation for this narrative. The meaning is what is of importance.

A final story in this group tells of how Daniel is thrown into a den of lions because he refuses to pray to King Darius, but is miraculously saved by the power of God.²⁸⁸ The king is amazed and, like his predecessors, honors Yahweh.

All of these stories are fiction rather than fact.²⁸⁹ They were adapted to meet the needs of the times, and they succeeded. Neither fire, nor lions, nor king's decree, nor

²⁸⁷ Daniel 5.

²⁸⁸ Daniel 6.

²⁸⁹ G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, p. 212.

any other terror should discourage the faithful. They must keep on observing the law and worshipping their God in spite of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Yahweh's purpose is unfolded. Four visions follow which show the design of Yahweh in epochs of history. He controls the nations. Four great beasts come up out of the sea.²⁹⁰ They are strange creatures. A lion with eagle's wings is meant to represent Babylon; a bear with three ribs in his mouth stands for Media; a leopard with four wings and four heads is Persia; and a most terrible beast with iron teeth and ten horns plays the part of the Grecian Selucidae. A little horn with eyes comes up in the midst of the other horns. This is Antiochus Epiphanes.²⁹¹ The lives of the first three beasts are prolonged for a time, but the fourth appears before the Ancient of Days and is sentenced to be slain. Daniel then understands the meaning of the beasts and knows that the rule of the hated Antiochus will be destroyed.

A second vision tells of a battle between a ram, which represents the Medo-Persian empire, and a buck, which stands for the Greek.²⁹² The buck overcomes the ram, but in doing so

²⁹⁰ Daniel 7:3.

²⁹¹ Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 570.

²⁹² Daniel 8.

he breaks his great horn. Four others spring up in its place. These horns are Alexander the Great and the four generals who follow him. This is made perfectly clear in the chapter. Again the little horn appears, representling Antiochus.

The third vision²⁹³ consists of a revelation, following Daniel's confession of guilt for his people, that the days of the abomination are numbered. The exile was to have lasted 70 years, and the persecution must end in 70 weeks. A common explanation is that 7 weeks represent 49 years from 587 to 538 B. C.; 62 weeks, or 434 years, carry the chronology up to 171 B. C., when Onias was slain; and one more week of 7 years points to 164 B. C. as the end of the trouble.²⁹⁴ If this prediction is true the people will not have long to wait.

The last vision²⁹⁵ recounts the history of the world from the decree of Cyrus in 538 B. C. to the anticipated death of Antiochus. Kings rise and fall. There are military adventures, perils, and persecutions until at last the Jews are free.

Through all of these visions there recurs the theme that history is determined. Yahweh knows and reveals to Daniel what will come to pass. The people can be sure

²⁹³ Daniel 9.

²⁹⁴ Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 751 and G. H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period, p. 215.

²⁹⁵ Daniel 10-12.

that if they are faithful they will soon be rid of Antiochus. It should be noted in connection with the visions that the king's forgotten dream of the image made of gold, silver, brass, and iron mixed with clay tells the same story.²⁹⁶ Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece will all come to naught through the fundamental weakness of Alexander's empire. That the first three have already fallen is assurance that the last will soon go.

Angels are made prominent. From the days of Isaiah onward a belief in the transcendence of God had been gradually developing. When Yahweh was near enough to walk and talk with men there was no need of any intermediary, but the farther away he seemed, the more he needed to communicate in other ways. Angels, as messengers of God, had long been recognized, but they had never assumed any great importance.

The book of Daniel gives more attention to angels than does any other Old Testament book. Babylon and Persian influences are being felt. One of the heavenly angels in Daniel speaks of being detained by a prince of Persia.²⁹⁷ Two angels are given names. Gabriel interprets Daniel's vision²⁹⁸ and gives him instruction in wisdom.²⁹⁹ Michael goes to the

²⁹⁶ Daniel 2:32.

²⁹⁷ Daniel 10:13.

²⁹⁸ Daniel 8:16.

²⁹⁹ Daniel 9:21-2.

help of a brother messenger,³⁰⁰ is spoken of as a prince,³⁰¹ and will have a part in the final deliverance of Israel.³⁰² There are others who have no names.³⁰³

The kingdom of righteousness is near. The "son of man" in Daniel has been variously interpreted. Was he one of the angelic host? Was he destined to be the messiah? Does he assume significance only because Jesus used the title? At any rate, he seems to be closely associated with the everlasting kingdom.

I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages might serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.³⁰⁴

He is not spoken of as a king, since in Maccabean times there was little hope of a temporal ruler and the high priest held the place of highest authority in the Jewish state. Welch thinks that he was meant to sum up within himself the features of the new kingdom and be "the final expression of God's will on earth."³⁰⁵

³⁰⁰ Daniel 10:13.

³⁰¹ Daniel 11:1.

³⁰² Daniel 12:1.

³⁰³ Daniel 10:16; 12:7.

³⁰⁴ Daniel 7:13-14.

³⁰⁵ Adam C. Welch, Visions of the End, pp. 131-2.

The new kingdom which is to be established shall be great and everlasting. Through the saints of the most high it will exercise dominion over all other governments. The conception of an ideal kingdom is well established in apocalyptic literature. The originality of Daniel lies in the fact that he promises the coming of the kingdom in 1290 days after the abomination of desolation.³⁰⁶ That would put it about six months after the cleansing of the temple.

Immortality becomes more clear. When the new kingdom is set up there will be a resurrection which follows a time of great tribulation.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise shall shine in the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.³⁰⁷

This is the clearest presentation of immortality in the Old Testament. Some righteous and some evil shall rise from the dead to be judged according to their deeds. Those who have encouraged others to be faithful shall have a special reward. There seems to be no idea of a general resurrection.

³⁰⁶ Daniel 12:13.

³⁰⁷ Daniel 12:1-3.

CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON OF PROPHECY AND APOCALYPSE

There now remains only the brief task of drawing together the outstanding qualities of prophecy and apocalypse for the purpose of comparison, contrast, and final analysis. Both prophecy and apocalypse have many roots in common, and in the beginning they often can hardly be distinguished from one another or separated. As time goes on they develop independently; yet they draw their nourishment from the same soil of the Hebrew religious genius, and some of their fruits are not dissimilar.

1. The Distinctive Elements of Prophecy

Religion as personal experience. In the early days God seemed very near and very real to men. Perhaps this was partly because of their belief that he expressed himself in and through the world of nature to which they lived so close. Sunshine or gentle rain were marks of his favor, while a storm meant that he was angry. Perhaps it was because, as primitive people, the Hebrews of four or five thousand years ago possessed a childlike quality of faith which enabled them to approach him easily and naturally. They must, also, have had some unique religious interests, because no other ancient people was able to make the contribution to the world which

they did. The Greeks gave art and philosophy, and the Romans later gave law, but the Hebrews gave religion.

Stories of how men of old, beginning with Adam and extending on down through the days of Abraham, Moses, and the judges, enjoyed fellowship with God became a vital part of the national heritage. The prophets believed in the personal nature of religion. They were supposed to understand the mind of God and to "speak" for him. A prophet was a genius in the measure that he experienced God; and his experience of God was measured by his reception of the divine will and his response to it.¹

Emphasis upon moral living. In the ancient stories there is much which reflects the crude morality of a primitive society, but also much which points the way to the highest standards of ethics. Abram was generous with his nephew, Lot, in offering him the choice of the pasture land, and because he was a good man who desired peace God could promise him that he would be the father of a mighty nation.² The Ten Commandments which Moses gave to the Children of Israel involved prohibitions against killing, stealing, committing

¹ H. H. Rowley, "The Nature of Prophecy in the Light of Recent Study," The Harvard Theological Review, January 1945, p. 38.

² Genesis 13.

adultery, bearing false witness, and coveting. They taught proper family relationships and reverence toward God. The world has never progressed beyond the necessity of the Ten Commandments.

The prophets caught the spirit of righteousness. Nathan dared to confront the great King David with the charge that he had sinned, and David confessed his guilt. Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah, and the later prophets, were vitally concerned with problems of right and wrong. They could see no value in sacrifice unless the heart of the worshiper was at peace with God and man.

Concern with current human affairs. The prophets seemed always to believe that religion was for the ever changing present. The wonder tales which were told about Elijah and Elisha are good illustrations of this. A dead child, an empty meal barrel, and even a sunken axe-head were matters of immediate concern.

The eighth and seventh century prophets struggled with the religious and political problems of their own day. Should the poor be sold for a pair of shoes? Should Israel be as an unfaithful wife? Should the people of Jerusalem waste their strength against burned out embers or tremble when Sennacherib appeared before the city? Should the people steal, murder, commit adultery, and follow after the Baals and then come into the house of the Lord? Their answer

was an emphatic "No!"

They were concerned with problems of everyday faith and morals because they felt that this was what Yahweh demanded. Theirs was not a social gospel, as such. Theirs was a religious message, based upon the conviction that since Yahweh was righteous his people must also be righteous.

Constructive visions of the future. The major prophets lived during times when their nation was growing or when they thought it might be strengthened if the people were true to their faith. As pioneer leaders in a pioneer society they were challenged by possibilities of development. Even though they saw the evils of the world they remained optimists. They believed that Yahweh would continue to watch over Israel in the future as he had done in the past. They expected that peace among the nations would eventually come. They were convinced that men might so live together that they should enjoy the fruits of their labor and have the satisfactions of a ripe old age.

The prophets did not venture to predict events beyond the immediate future. As any good preacher of today ought to be able to do, they interpreted for their people what the inevitable results of sin and unbelief would be, and what blessings might come if they followed the ways of godliness. They believed in the fundamental goodness of the universe because they believed that God is good.

Progress through divinely guided effort. The prophets believed in God, but they also believed in man. God continued to reveal the principles by which Israel should live. The life of the nation was a common responsibility of Yahweh and his people. Divine leadership and human faithfulness pointed the way to progress.

Yahweh was all powerful, but men were free to ignore him, as they often did. The prophets were continually crying out against the sins of the nation. This did not mean that Yahweh was unreasonably severe or that the people were more bent on sinning than were their neighbors. It means that the prophets wanted the people to work together with their God in the interests of the nation. He was ready to bless them whenever they were worthy of his favor.

2. The Distinctive Elements of Apocalypse

The Messiah. The messianic hope arose primarily from a desire that an ideal king be restored on the throne of David. Hölischer considers this the most significant factor in the eschatological expectations of the Hebrews. It is, he says,

. .nicht die Erwartung eines einzelnen Königs der Endzeit, sondern des Wiederstehens der davidischen Dynastie.³

³ Gustav Hölischer, Die Ursprung der jüdischen Eschatologie, p. 16.

Sometimes he was thought of as a great military ruler who would trample down his enemies, and sometimes as a man of gentleness and peace. He was regularly the personification of the kind of a new age of which the individual apocalyptic writer happened to be dreaming. He was to be the representative of Yahweh, filled and guided by his spirit. He was often pictured as riding upon an ass, not because he was to be weak, but because Yahweh was to be strong for him. There would be little use for war horses in the new age. Yahweh would take care of that. The messiah was to be the ideal leader.

It is likely that after the exile so much attention was given to the messiah because Yahweh seemed majestic and distant. The messiah was to be a man who could bring to earth all of the ideal conditions of which the people were dreaming.

The Kingdom of God. The apocalyptists expected that when evil was destroyed and the earth transformed the rule of righteousness should be established. There is no single picture of how this should be. In earth or in heaven, in terms of years or of ages, it might be administered through a personal leader, saints, or Yahweh himself. The apocalyptists did not think of building a Utopia out of earthly resources with which they were familiar, but left the reconstruction to the Almighty in his supreme wisdom. The building of the kingdom was completely beyond their own power, but they were to enjoy the benefits.

The Kingdom of God. . . was not the place where all the clever things they could think of would be given reality; it was the place where the will of God would be perfectly done.⁴

It should be neither surprising nor distressing that no blueprints were given for the new age. Modern people are likely to think of progress in terms of economic or mechanical accomplishments. Luxuries, comforts, labor-saving devices, rapid means of communication and travel, or some new source of power appeal to the human mind. Yet these make humanity no better and may greatly multiply human woes unless rightfully used.

The apocalyptists expected the Kingdom of God to be planned and maintained by superior wisdom. Their responsibility lay not in endeavoring to bring it about, but in being obedient and faithful. They seemed to feel that inasmuch as evil is rebellions against God, then he alone must deal with it.

The Day of Yahweh. There was an ancient belief that in Yahweh's own time he would break through into the world and destroy the thin barriers which separate him from the everyday realm of men. Since God is good and men have sinned there must be a tremendous reaction. Yahweh comes in fire and smoke. The sun, moon, and stars will be shaken. The earth will tremble. The hills will melt. Whether he comes through

⁴ H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of Apocalyptic, pp. 155-6.

one kind of a natural upheaval or another the result will be the same. The evil of the world will be punished and destroyed through the avenging power of the great war god. All of the resources of the universe, the apocalyptists thought, will be at his command.

Amos warned that Israel should fear the day, but the apocalyptists began to welcome it. They knew that it would mean a great tribulation in which perhaps only a third of the people would be saved; but they thought of it as a necessary prelude to the complete manifestation of God in the world. The day of Yahweh would be his own occasion of triumph. At that time all creation must bow to his will or be destroyed.

Closely associated with the day of Yahweh was the judgment of the nations. With only a few exceptions there was to be no hope for them. Not only did they represent evil, but they had mistreated Yahweh's chosen people.

The New Heavens and the New Earth. The blessed state of earthly existence would be made possible through a complete and final expression of Yahweh's power. Those fortunate ones remaining to enjoy it would have comforts, security, peace, children, and contented old age.

The new heavens and the new earth were to be physical parts of a transformed creation. The transformation of the earth would be seen in the renewed productivity of the soil. The transformation of the heavens would be seen in a proper

distribution of sunshine and rain with an entire absence of storms. Many material benefits would come as a result.

There was absolutely nothing which men could do to bring about the new creation. That was entirely out of their hands. There was, therefore, a great emphasis upon ritual as a means of securing and preserving the favor of Yahweh. Temple worship, sacrifices, fasts, circumcision, and the law must be carefully observed. Haggai, it is true, had promised that Yahweh would bless the people when they had rebuilt the temple. He said that Yahweh would shake the heavens and the earth, but did not speak of them being made new. That was left to Trito-Isaiah.

The new heavens and the new earth suggested no idea of a spiritual existence apart from the body or from the world.

3. Similarities of Prophecy and Apocalypse

Monotheism. Prophets and apocalyptists, alike, came eventually to believe in the existence of only one God who exercised control over all the affairs of men and of nations. "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah,"⁵ and "Thou shalt have no other gods before me,"⁶ were fundamental to the Hebrew religion. Long before the time of Deutero-Isaiah, who was the first to teach complete and universal monotheism,

⁵ Deuteronomy 6:4.

⁶ Exodus 20:3.

there was a growing belief in the one God. The worship of the Baals, which were not one but many, was the most immediate threat to Yahweh. Neither prophecy nor apocalypse could have much meaning without a belief that Yahweh was supreme.

Faith in the Power of God. Prophets and apocalyptists firmly believed in the power of their God, but in a somewhat different manner. The prophets taught that Yahweh exercises initiative and control in history. Assyria and Babylon were puppets in his hands. He was using them in the ever changing human scene to gain his own ends and to punish Israel. Isaiah spoke of Assyria as "the rod" of his anger which he sent against the profane nation, Israel. Assyria will spoil, and prey, and tread the people down like the mire of the street, having no thought that he is being used of God for a purpose.

He meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so,
but it is in his heart to cut off the nations not a few.⁷

The apocalyptists believed that Yahweh had a final purpose for the world, and that he would use his own power to bring it about. They centered their attention on the last dramatic act. Man plays his weak and foolish part on the earthly stage, but just as he had no initiative in the

⁷ Isaiah 10:5-7.

original creation, so he can have no power over shaping the final end. If this is truly God's world, Rowley insists, there is essential logic in this point of view.⁸

Hope for the Future. This is a common element, but also expressed in different ways. If God is good and also supreme, then there must, of necessity, be hope. The prophets expected to help bring about the new day, while the apocalyptists left the transformantion of the new heavens and the new earth to their God. It is interesting to speculate upon which had the more faith. From their fundamental points of view those of each group were consistent.

Punishment for Sin. Punishment must surely come upon all wrongdoers. There was a long established belief that the person who is righteous will enjoy long life, wealth, children, and honor, while the wrongdoer will surely be cut off.

Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.⁹

This sentiment runs all the way through Psalms and Proverbs. Retribution comes in this present earthly life. Be good and you will be happy; sin and you will be cursed.

This doctrine is not seriously challenged except in

⁸ H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of Apocalyptic, p. 145.

⁹ Psalm 1:6.

Job and Ecclesiastes. While the prophets expected retribution to be meted out as the days and the years went by, the apocalyptists were confident that it would come in the day of Yahweh and in the great judgment. The fundamental principle is the same. Sin will be punished.

4. Points of Contrast between Prophecy and Apocalypse

The prophets spoke directly to the people, either individually or collectively, and stood back of their own oracles. Jeremiah was thrown into prison and threatened with death because of his plain speech. With the exception of Joel, all of the thoroughgoing apocalyptists were anonymous or pseudonymous. The ancients had no scruples against copying the work or using the names of other authors.¹⁰ They even seemed to feel that a book was given more dignity when associated with some well known person of another age. Pershaps pseudonymity served as protection for writers with messages in a dangerous age. Another explanation rests in the fact that since the canon was supposed to have been closed with Malachi, no sacred writing could be accepted as authentic unless associated with some honored name of the past.

¹⁰ William Fairweather, The Background of the Gospels, p. 248.

The prophets, almost without exception, used oral address, while the later apocalyptists employed only the written word. The prophets sometimes wrote or dictated their messages and sometimes they were preserved by disciples or by listeners. Haggai is an example of a man with apocalyptic interests who spoke directly, but some would call him a prophet. The book of Daniel is a perfect example of pseudonymous writing. Some pious Jew in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes composed his pamphlets of encouragement in the name of a prophet who had lived more than four hundred years before.

"Thus saith the Lord," is the most common prophetic introduction to an oracle. Since the prophets were "speaking for a god," they gave the impression and seemed to believe that they were articulating the very words which Yahweh would have them utter. The apocalyptists were likely to say, "And it shall come to pass." The first were voicing personal conviction; the second were expressing doctrines of belief and expectation.

Many of the prophetic oracles are in poetic forms. This does not mean rime, but parallelism and stressed and unstressed syllables. Under the stimulus of emotion Hebrew speech frequently fell into such forms. Possibly the habit went back to the ecstatic dances of earlier times when words were repeated according to a rythmic beat. Later apocalyptic

writings, on the other hand, are in extended prose. They reflect the style of hand written composition.

The prophets believed in the nearness of their God and felt themselves to be in intimate fellowship with him. Isaiah experienced a majestic vision of Yahweh, but saw him, heard him, and felt the cleansing fire from the altar upon his lips. Ezekiel was the first to stress the transcendence of Yahweh. Thereafter the writers with apocalyptic interests thought of the divine being as farther and farther removed from the everyday dwelling of men. In prophetic times there was no particular need of angels, but as time went on and Persian influences were felt, angels seemed necessary to bridge the gap between God and man.

The personal religion of the prophets led them to stress principles of moral conduct. The apocalyptists turned to ritual as the most effective means of gaining Yahweh's favor. Since they believed in a supernatural end of the age, they naturally felt that everyday conduct mattered much less than anticipation of the final crisis. They believed that Yahweh looked upon them with much greater favor than upon the sinful enemy nations. The Children of Israel had already suffered for their sins, and did not need to be concerned with a religion of moral conduct. Their religion was not necessarily degenerate. It simply centered interest on the future instead of on the present.

The prophets believed in a punishment of the nations, but gradually their thinking led up to the great contribution of Deutero-Isaiah that all men might come to honor Yahweh and enjoy his blessings. Deutero-Isaiah was the prophet of universalism. Others followed him. The apocalyptists, with few exceptions, saw hope for Israel only. Gog should suffer defeat. The nations should be judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat. They should utterly perish, and perhaps only few individuals live to recognize the evil of their ways and come to Jerusalem. There they might serve the Jews.

5. Relative Values of Prophecy and Apocalypse

Prophecy and apocalypse are both essential parts of the religious contribution made by the Hebrew genius. Prophecy flourishes best in times of optimism, and apocalypse in times of crisis. Each has made distinctive contributions to religious thought. Charles insists that the doctrines of immortality, of a new age, and of final judgment came only through apocalyptic and would have been lost without it.¹¹ This hardly seems plausible. Immortality, for example, was in the beginning an outgrowth of totemism, ancestor-worship, necromancy, and the idea from the first of Genesis that man

¹¹ R. H. Charles, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology, p. 180.

was meant to be immortal.¹² There are glimpses of hope in in immortality in the book of Job,¹³ which is certainly not apocalyptic. It would seem reasonable to believe that in time the enduring values of apocalyptic might have been discovered through prophetic inspiration, without some of the harsh doctrines which accompanied apocalyptic thought.

Apocalyptic is the most difficult of the various types of biblical literature for the average person to understand. Unless he is a student or has received some careful instruction he is easily led astray.

The average educated person of today believes in the orderly working of God in his universe. Chemistry, astronomy, physics, and even biology, are ruled by mathematical laws. A devout man of even a few hundred years ago could have thought of God dwelling just above the crystal dome which was supposed to hold the sun, moon, and stars. The windows of heaven might have opened, according to him, and the earth might have been shaken to let the floods pour in. In awesome reverence he might have thought of God riding on the lightning flash.

Such conceptions as these, on which much of apocalyptic is based, are foreign to modern thinking. There are many evils

¹² W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, Hebrew Religion, pp. 317-20.

¹³ Job 19:25-8.

in the world, and sometimes they seem to be multiplied, but if man has any part in overcoming them he must labor through moral and spiritual means.

Some of the believers in the apocalyptic method have pointed out that the earth may finally come to an end through stellar catastrophe as well as by a slow death through the cooling of the sun. The atomic bomb has stimulated apocalyptic thinking. But there is a great deal of difference between a cataclysmic shaking of the universe which Yahweh controls, in order that some may be saved, and a collision of heavenly bodies which would mean the end of all life on the earth. The atomic bomb is not being used by the Almighty as a means of intervention. It is in the awkward hands of men. Can it still be said that God uses the horrors of modern warfare to punish evil when the world wars seem to multiply wickedness rather than destroy it?

One of the greatest conceptions of the Christian religion is the Kingdom of God. It seems to be based, as Jesus taught about it, upon a transformation of the hearts of men rather than upon any transformation of the physical universe. It is concerned with moral and spiritual principles which are both temporal and eternal.

The Christian faith remains personal and missionary in its outlook. There is no room for any feeling of racial or national superiority in this small world. The gospel is

for all mankind. It is the constant task of the Christian faith to solve the problems of the individual and of the world through the best human efforts, with all possible dependence upon divine inspiration.

Neither prophecy nor apocalypse ended with the Old Testament. During the two centuries before the time of Christ there was a great flood of apocalyptic writing which was not admitted into the sacred canon. Jesus made considerable use of apocalyptic, but was primarily a prophet. The book of Revelation is an apocalypse. Through the centuries prophecy and apocalypse have commanded the attention of men according to the needs of the times in which they lived. Optimism and despair have had much to do with the pendulum swing.

It would seem that prophecy offers a much more constructive message for the present day, but such a conclusion is necessarily a matter of personal opinion. Although the methods of prophecy and apocalypse differ from each other, it must be remembered that their fundamental purpose is the same. They both look forward to the destruction of evil and the establishment of righteousness. They both teach faith in the one supreme God of all the universe.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to study prophecy and apocalypse in the Old Testament. They are approached as two types of literature which reveal distinctive characteristics of thought and method. Throughout the dissertation there is a careful handling of the biblical material. The prophetic and apocalyptic sections are placed in their proper literary and historical backgrounds, and then analyzed in a manner designed to clarify their significance.

It is assumed that the roots of both prophecy and apocalypse may be traced back to the early beginnings of Semitic religion, that they were subject to long and gradual development, and that the spiritual nourishment which made their growth possible was drawn primarily from the soil of the Hebrew religious genius. The nature of their growth was determined by the changing times and by the personalities of the husbandmen who tilled the soil.

The first two chapters outline the developments of pre-exilic and post-exilic prophecy, and the next two deal with apocalypse, while chapter five draws together the points of comparison and contrast.

The early Hebrews were extremely conscious of spiritual influences about them. In order to discover truth they made use of necromancy, divination, clairvoyance, and ecstasy. As

mouthpieces of the divine being, the prophets gained much from the religion of the patriarchs who had enjoyed personal relationship with God. They learned gradually how to interpret the divine will through the inner response of their own souls. Moses, Elijah, and others of the early prophets directed attention to worship, moral principles, national affairs, and human needs. They spoke with fearless authority, and were regarded with respect.

During the days when Syria was declining and Assyria was growing in power there was a golden age of prosperity in Palestine. Rapid economic and social changes introduced a host of evils against which the prophets struggled. Each one made his own contribution to religious understanding.

Amos taught a practical monotheism, had little use for ritual, and established the truth that religion means righteousness; Hosea, quickened in sympathetic understanding by an unfortunate family experience, made clear the unfailing love of Yahweh; Isaiah, during and after the years when Samaria was crumbling, insisted that Judah might remain free through repentance and trust; Micah directed attention to the interests of the common man; and Jeremiah, a sturdy and sensitive soul who warned the people against impending disaster, turned away from legalism to find a basis for individual relationship with Yahweh in the New Covenant. All of these men stressed the necessity of righteousness, moral conduct,

faith, and human responsibility.

The destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. fulfilled the gloomiest expectations of the prophets. The temple was broken down. National sovereignty was brought to an end. Possibly one fourth of the people were carried away into captivity. The exiles in Babylon were a transplanted people, but not slaves. They became the founders of the New Judaism which laid emphasis upon piety and the Law. Many Jews migrated to Egypt where they built a temple. Jerusalem continued to be a religious center, even though the people there were poor and discouraged.

In 538 B. C. Cyrus conquered Babylon. In accord with a liberal policy he decreed that the Jewish exiles be released. Many returned, and the temple was finally completed in 516 B. C. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and instituted a religious reform. Ezra followed him. These men were interested in racial purity, temple worship, and the Law.

The exilic and post-exilic prophets stressed righteousness and universalism. Deutero-Isaiah brought a message of hope. He believed that all nations would learn to worship the one God through the faithfulness and sufferings of Israel. Four psalms reflect this same prophetic confidence. Zechariah wanted the temple rebuilt in order that the favor of Yahweh might be extended to Israel and to the world. Malachi, being convinced that Yahweh would fulfill his

promises only as the people were faithful in worship and in righteousness, endeavored to revive a listless faith. Isaiah 19 describes how even the Egyptians and the Assyrians will come to the God of Israel. The author of Jonah was the last of the prophetic line. He protested against religious pride and narrow nationalism. He demonstrated that Israel was commissioned to proclaim a universal message of righteousness and repentance.

Eschatology means "the doctrine of the last things," and apocalypse means "the revelation of the last things." Eschatological beliefs seem to have had their beginning in the nature of Yahweh as a war god who displayed his power in natural phenomena. The Hebrews borrowed little from Egyptian or Babylonian sources, but searched within themselves for an answer to the double challenge of oppression and aspiration.

Long before any biblical material was written down the people were telling stories of how Yahweh delivered the righteous. Noah, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, and David are some of the examples. The greatest demonstration of Yahweh's power was in the unforgettable Red Sea crossing. Ancient poetry, such as the songs of Moses and Deborah and the oracles of Balaam, illustrate a faith in the intervention of Yahweh. The covenant relationship led the people to feel that Yahweh was pledged to protect them. Even though they might sin, he was merciful.

Four escatological conceptions subject to gradual growth were the day of Yahweh, against which Amos and Hosea warned the people and to which Zephaniah gave much emphasis; the remnant, out of which grew the faith that in every crisis some would always be saved; the messianic hope, based upon a desire for the restoration of the kingdom; and punishment of the nations, seen clearly in Nahum and Obadiah.

Ezekiel marks the historical separation of prophecy and apocalypse. Before the fall of Jerusalem he taught a prophetic message of doom and repentance. Afterward, by stressing the absolute nature of Yahweh, the certainty of restoration, hope for the individual, and blessings through ritual, he gave a great impetus to apocalypse.

At least eight apocalyptists were the spiritual descendants of Ezekiel. The author of Isaiah 13-23 taught that the nations would be destroyed and Israel spared; Haggai promised great blessings for Israel through divine intervention as soon as the temple was rebuilt; Trito-Isaiah looked for the destruction of evil and a new state of blessedness; Joel was inspired to write about the day of Yahweh by his observation of a terrible locust plague; the author of Micah 4-7 stressed the remnant, the messiah, and the final triumph of Israel after sin was taken away; the author of Zephariah 9-14 bitterly denounced the enemies of Israel, particularly the Greeks, anticipated the early establishment of a messianic

kingdom, and declared that anyone venturing to prophesy should be put to death; the unknown writer of Isaiah 24-27 dealt with the power of Yahweh, judgment, restoration, and immortality; and the author of Daniel wrote to encourage the Jews during days of crisis by assuring them that Yahweh controls history, delivers the faithful, speaks through his angels, establishes righteousness, and promises immortality.

The rise of the Greeks, the threat of Hellenism, and the terrific persecutions under Antiochus Epiphanes called forth the last apocalyptic writings. The book of Daniel appeared during the Maccabean rebellion.

In conclusion it may be noted that the prophets and the apocalyptists were alike in that they taught the supremacy of Yahweh, the destruction of evil, and hope for the future; but they differed radically in the methods which they employed. The prophets depended upon direct relationship with Yahweh, were concerned with immediate human problems, insisted on standards of moral conduct, taught that all the world would learn to worship the God of the Hebrews, and believed in progress through human effort guided by divine inspiration. The apocalyptists, on the other hand, looked to the ultimate end and were not greatly concerned with the present. They believed that evil would be destroyed by a cataclysmic shaking of the universe and a new age of blessedness established for Israel through the limitless

power of Yahweh. Since he seemed transcendent to them they worshipped him through ritual. The apocalyptists contributed more to an understanding of the messiah, the Kingdom of God, and immortality than did the prophets.

Prophecy flourished during days of optimism when there was hope for the nation. Apocalypse arose in times of crisis when human effort seemed futile. Prophecy was often recorded in direct, spoken, poetic form following the introduction, "Thus saith Yahweh." Apocalypse was usually anonymous or pseudonymous, indirect, and written in narrative form in accord with the expression, "And it shall come to pass."

Neither prophecy nor apocalypse ceased with the Old Testament. This dissertation should furnish some background for a study of their further development during the intertestamental and the New Testament periods.

BIOGRAPHY



Cecil Eli Pearson was born of Quaker parentage in Jonesboro, Indiana on March 15, 1899. His father was David Shaffer Pearson, and his mother is Sarah Allen (Pearson) Hoffnell. When he was six months old his parents moved from Indiana to Oregon where he grew up in a rural fruit farming community near Salem.

He attended Salem High School and was graduated from Pacific Academy in 1917, from Pacific College in 1922, and from Willamette University in 1923. Before finishing college he spent nearly a year in relief work in France under the American Friends Service Committee. After graduation from Willamette he taught for two years in Union High School, Crane, Oregon. He attended the T. Wistar Brown Graduate School of Haverford College for one year. In 1929 he was graduated from Hartford Theological Seminary.

He is a birthright member of the Society of Friends, and was recorded a minister in that society in 1927. He has served as pastor of Congregational churches in Avon, Connecticut and in Berkley, Massachusetts. He has served Friends meetings in Monkton, Vermont, in Clinton Corners, New York, in Lynn, Massachusetts, in Somerset, Massachusetts, and in Glens Falls, New York. At present he is pastor of the South Glens Falls Friends Meeting in South Glens Falls, New York.

In September 1925 he and Mary Esther Pennington of Newberg, Oregon were married. They have two daughters, Bertha May and Esther Mary.

He attended Yale in 1917 and was graduated from

Yale in 1921, then Pacific College in 1922, and

from Williams University in 1923. Before leaving college

he spent nearly a year in relief work in France under the

American Friends Service Committee. After graduation from

Williams he taught for two years in Union High School,

Green, Oregon. He attended the T. Walter Brown Institute

School of Christian College for two years. In 1928 he was

graduated from Hartford Theological Seminary.

He is a lifetime member of the Society of Friends,

and was reported a minister in that society in 1927. He has

served as pastor of Congregational churches in New

Connaticut and in Berkeley, Massachusetts. He has served

Poland missions in Boston, Vermont, in Old Saybrook,

New York, in Lynn, Massachusetts, in Somerville, Massachusetts,

and in Elmhurst, New York. At present he is pastor of the

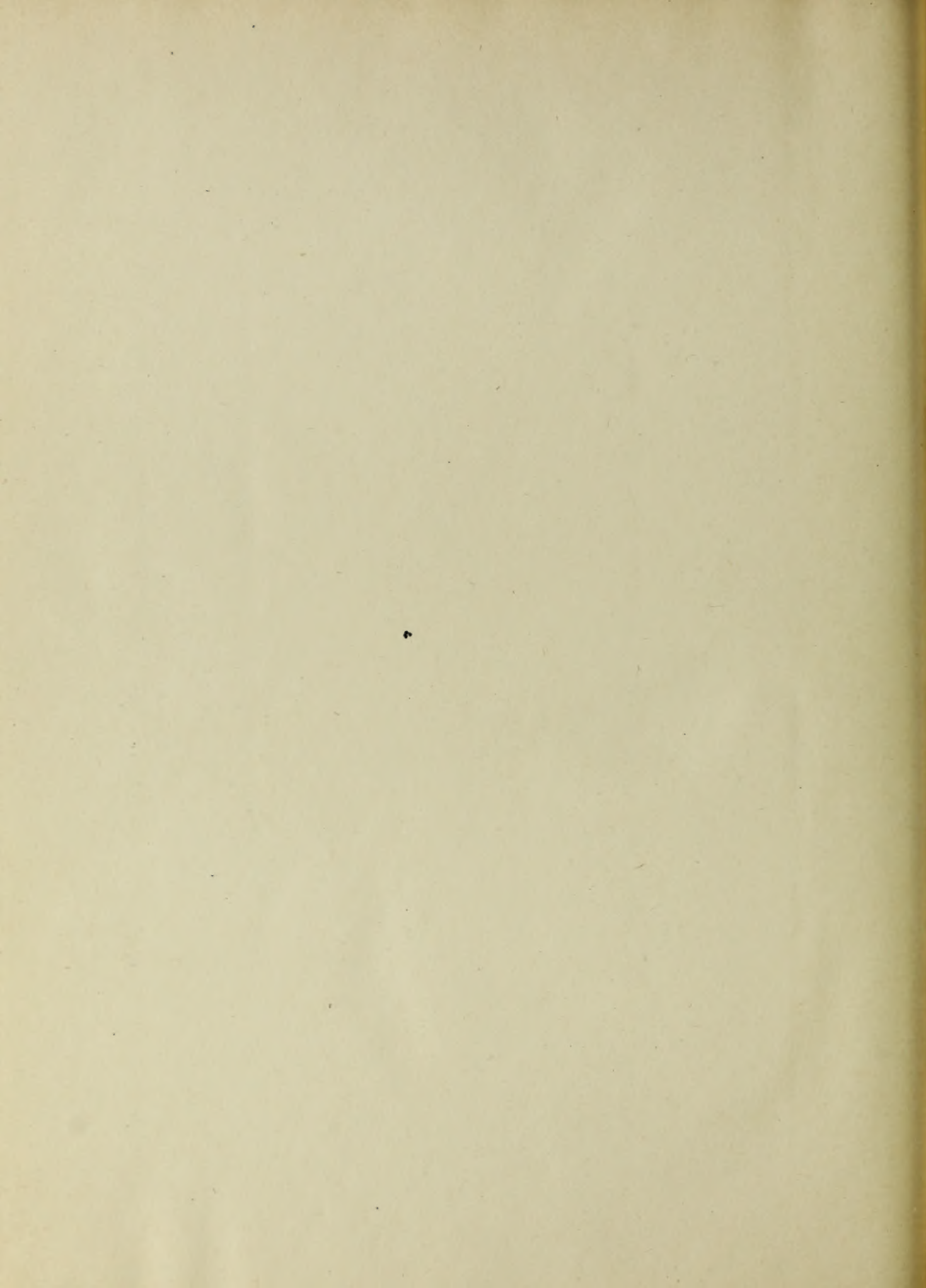
South Elmhurst Friends Meeting in South Elmhurst, New

York.

In September 1935 he and Mary Esther founded the

Hebrew, Greek and Latin schools. They have two daughters,

Georgia and Esther Mary.



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